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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[AN UNLOVELY WOMAN.]

A WOMAN SPURNED.

CHAPTER III.

"Though the world for this commend thee,
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe."

Brown.

On reading the letter announcing the speedy arrival of her niece the good lady exclaimed:

"Goodness, it never rains but it pours! We've got one young lady to manage, and that is enough in all conscience; though I must say that Agnes is an exception to all the girls I have known. She doesn't give us a mite of trouble, and is a wonderful help to me. But it will be different with this foreign-bred miss. She'll be full of airs and graces, and how we are to get on with her I am sure I don't know. What shall we do, Proff?" that being the abbreviation of his title by which she habitually addressed him.

He looked annoyed, but calmly said:

"The only thing we can do is to receive your niece when she comes, and treat her kindly. She has a right in this house, too, remember, Sally, for after we are gone, it will be hers by inheritance."

"But we are not gone yet, nor likely to go for many a long year, Proff, and everything is mine as long as I live. I don't care about having Dick's daughter thrust on me in this way. He never did anything for me when I had to live as a dependent in the house where you and I first met nearly thirty years ago. I liked you then, Proff, but you couldn't get away from your studies

long enough to find it out. But that's neither here nor there; let's go back to our subject. Emma Crofton has never written to me before in her life, and she coolly informs me that she is coming here to live, as she is the heiress to the place, and thinks she has a claim on me on that account. What does she mean by that? Does she think money claims stronger than those of blood?"

"I suppose," said the professor, apologetically, "that Miss Crofton puts forward the only legitimate claim she has as an excuse for coming to you. As you have never seen her, of course you cannot be expected to have a very tender affection for her."

"Umph! no, indeed! Why should I, when her father called Henry an idiot for taking me to live with him after he got on in the world, and when he died, and left me all he had accumulated, Dick threatened to break the will, and would have made the effort if his daughter had not been named as my successor. I do not want this girl here, and if I could help it she should not come at all. Yet what can I do?"

"Nothing, my dear, but let things take their course. You are not likely to be long troubled with this young lady, for she will never be willing to seclude herself in the country. Our quiet tea-drinkings and prosy dinner-parties would tire her to death. She is old enough to be married, and she will soon find a husband, no doubt; especially as she has some fortune of her own, with good expectations in the future."

"Old enough to be married! I should think she is! She must be nearly thirty, and I wonder how it is that she is single yet. In France women are considered superannuated at that age, and she has lived there the greater part of her life."

"You forget that a Frenchman has been found to idealise that age in women, and your niece may have waited till her charms are fully matured before she gives herself to another," said the professor, with his genial smile. "You waited a long time yourself, you know."

"But that was different. The one I wanted didn't come along till my day was almost past; but I was paid for waiting at last. This girl, with her shallow nature and cold heart, would be incapable of such constancy as I showed to you, you dear old Proff. This letter shows what she is. If she is as ugly and unattractive as her mother was, it's no wonder that she's found no one to take her yet. Kitty Longman's money bought my brother; he has made it fly till her daughter hasn't enough left to buy a husband in her turn. That's why she's coming here, I'm sure."

"But, my dear, I think you are judging your niece very hardly. Let her come to us and find out what she is worth. You know we had some misgivings about Agnes, and see what she is to us now."

"Agnes! Oh, yes, to be sure we had; but, then, where is there such another girl as Agnes to be found? I don't know another to be compared to her."

"Nor I, but still they exist in plenty. My niece is no rara avis: she is not exceptionally endowed in any way. She is not 'too good for human nature's daily food,' and that is her greatest charm to me. Yours may prove quite as great an acquisition to us. Pray don't sit up in judgment upon her before she comes. It is hardly fair."

"Well, I believe you are right, as you always are, you wise man. It's lucky for me that I

have a domestic Solomon of my own, to whose judgment I am always ready to submit. I must go to town to receive my unknown niece, I suppose, as she is a person of too much consequence to be left to find her own way here alone."

"You can do as you choose about that, my dear, but it will be kind in you to go, and after all, she may appreciate the attention."

So Mrs. Tardy went to the metropolis, leaving her husband and home to be cared for in her absence by Agnes.

Miss Crofton had written word that she expected to sail in the "Scotia" on her next trip, as she had gone with her friends to their home.

Three days after her departure, Mrs. Tardy returned, accompanied by the young lady and a French waiting-maid, who had been in Miss Crofton's service several years.

Emma Crofton was a tall, pale woman with light blue eyes, and a quantity of lustreless hair of that shade of reddish brown which so often accompanies a pasty complexion.

Her figure was good, and her hands and arms were of uncommon beauty. As Manvers had said, Emma Crofton was not a bad looking woman, but she was far from being a handsome one.

Her manners were quiet and ladylike, and there was nothing about her which indicated her foreign breeding. But she was indolence personified, and she made no effort to accommodate herself to the habits of the home in which she was received. Her breakfast was taken up to her by her own maid, and she never appeared before twelve o'clock. When she did join the family circle, she sat with folded hands, or read a French book of which she had brought a store with her.

She made no effort to play the agreeable to the family circle, and showed plainly that she considered herself the rightful possessor of all around her. She quietly assumed that she was entitled, as the heiress, to more consideration than Agnes, and unceremoniously put her aside when their claims came in collision, as they sometimes did.

Undemonstrative as she was, she observed everything, and drew her own conclusions as to what she saw. When visitors came her icy impassibility seemed to thaw, and she would talk well, even eloquently, of her foreign experiences, but in the family circle she sat dull, and apparently preoccupied, though nothing escaped those pale, sleepy-looking eyes, and she resented with all her heart the evidences of fond affection with which Agnes was regarded by the old couple, by whom her winning ways were more highly appreciated than ever when they contrasted them with the apathetic indifference of their new inmate.

To Mrs. Tardy her niece was an incubus. She hated her dawdling ways, and declared her the most useless of human creatures.

She was always actively employed herself, and could not understand how Emma could sit day after day with idle hands and still tongue, scarcely making an effort to speak on any subject except when strangers were present.

"Dear me, child," she said one day, "how can you stand such a life as you lead? I should die of the blues if I never found anything to do. Work is life, and the good Father did not put us in the world to sit still and look on while others labour. It's a sin to make no better use of the life he gives us than you do, Emma."

The pale eyes emitted a flash of fire, and Miss Crofton haughtily replied:

"I am no child to be taken to task by you, or anyone else, nor will I submit to it. I am old enough to be the best judge of what suits me, and I never intend to be dictated to in any respect. I have never learned how to sew or knit, and that is all women can do who are able to live without actual hard labour. I was taught embroidery in the convent in which I was kept till I was old enough to be placed in a fashionable finishing school; but I should like to know if that is not a waste of time, except to those poor creatures who gain their bread by it. For my part I think I had better give to them the money such things cost, than wear my eyes out preparing them for myself."

At her first words Mrs. Tardy looked pained and astonished at the tone of Emma's reply. But as she talked on in her contemptuous, half-cynical tone, the old lady regained her self-control, and coldly said:

"I perceive that you can talk fast enough, and say disagreeable things enough when the spirit moves you, silent as you usually are among us. Of course you are old enough to guide yourself, and I certainly shall not suggest to you again that you would be happier if you had something to do. I should think a woman of your age would have found out that for yourself long ago."

A faint streak of red came into the colourless face of Miss Crofton, but she composedly replied:

"I think we had better not quarrel, aunt. I spoke too quickly just now, and you are trying to sneer at me because I am no longer a girl to be managed and petted when I am submissive to your will. You have one of that kind, and that ought to content you."

Mrs. Tardy flushed, and her eyes flashed angrily:

"You care nothing for me, and make no effort to win upon me in any way, yet you are jealous of my fondness for Agnes. If she does what I think right, it is not through submission, but through her tender affection for me. She would not wound me in any way if she could help it."

"Perhaps not; she has something to gain by keeping on your blind side. I have no interest to serve, and therefore I can afford to act and speak independently."

The old lady dropped her knitting and looked with distended eyes at the speaker. Her gaze was met by one coolly defiant, and it was several moments before she found voice to say:

"I pity anyone who can so misinterpret the open, ingenuous nature of Agnes Temple. She has nothing to gain from me, for she knows that what I have saved from my income will be given to her uncle when I die, if I should go first."

"And from him it will descend to his niece. Of course I am naturally bitter at finding an interloper in the house which must some day be my own, and to see her preferred before me every day."

"As yet, I am mistress of this house, Miss Crofton, and I shall receive into it whoever I please, and treat them according to my own notions of what is due to them. If you are dissatisfied with what you see, you can find a home that is more congenial to you. The fact that you are my niece, and must some day inherit my property, does not bind us irrevocably together."

"Perhaps not, but my father bade me come to you, and assured me that I have a right here. However, if you find my presence disagreeable I can do as you suggest, provided you will give me a sufficient allowance to pay my expenses at some hotel in London. I should like to live there with a handsome suite of rooms to receive my friends in, and I cannot afford it unless you pay the expenses for me."

The face of Mrs. Tardy was worth studying as she listened to this proposal.

When her amazement and indignation had subsided sufficiently to enable her to speak calmly, she said:

"I daresay the idle, lounging life of a fashionable hotel would suit you far better than our quiet way of living, but I cannot imagine why you should think me so anxious to get rid of you out of my house as to pay so dearly to attain that object. I cannot afford it for one thing, and for another, I would not if I could, for you have no claim on my income while I live, and you have enough of your own to render you perfectly independent."

"Enough!" scornfully repeated Emma. "Ideas differ as to what is enough to live on suitably. I have but ten thousand pounds invested in Government bonds at five per cent. The whole income arising from it is less than I have expended in one year on my toilet. My poor father always liked to see me magnificently dressed."

Mrs. Tardy opened her eyes widely at this statement.

"All that money spent on finery, when there are thousands and thousands of people who have not enough to eat in a city like Paris! How could you have the heart—how could you dare to spend so much on milliners and mantuamakers when there was a single creature in the world lacking bread? Such prodigality was shameful—far worse, it was sinful."

"Oh, we gave alms to the poor," replied Emma, indifferently. "If I had five times as much I could easily manage to spend it. I think hoarding money is far more reprehensible than spending it, and that you must do, my good aunt. You have put away a nice little nest-egg, no doubt, by this time, and as my Uncle Henry gave me nothing till after your death I think it but fair that you should do something for me yourself."

The old lady took up her knitting, and coldly said:

"Your ideas of fairness and mine differ materially. If you choose to stay on here you can do so; but beyond giving you a home, I will do nothing for Dick's daughter. I owe no debt to him, for he did nothing for me when he was rolling in riches, and I was dependent. My income is not much larger than yours, yet I support this house out of it, and lay by something every year. You can do the same if you choose, but from my savings you will never have a penny."

"I comprehend—you are saving that Agnes Temple may be benefitted hereafter, and, no doubt, that is why young Manvers is so anxious to win her for his wife. If he knew that your fortune is not your own to dispose of, he might try to do better in another quarter."

Mrs. Tardy regarded her keenly, and smiled a little bitterly, as she replied:

"You mean that he would turn to you, I suppose, if he knew that you will be richer some day than you are now. I have remarked that you are more animated and agreeable when he is here than at any other time. But let me tell you that he is quite aware of your claims on my estate, and he would hardly expect me to pass over my own niece in favour of my husband's, if I had the power to do so. He and Agnes have known each other for many years; their mothers were intimate friends, and they were thrown much together in their childhood. A strong mutual attachment binds them together, I believe, though Julian Manvers has not yet asked her to marry him. I fear that he will do so very soon, for I shall hate to give my dear girl up."

A sudden light flashed into Emma Crofton's eyes, and she said:

"The affair is not yet settled, then. From his devotion I thought they were engaged. I cannot see what there is in so commonplace a girl as Miss Temple to attract such a man as he is."

"You can't, but others can. It is her sweetness—her nobleness of nature, and the inexpressible charm which thorough goodness and simplicity of heart throw around their possessor. That is why Julian Manvers prefers Agnes before all other women, and gives her the sincere homage of his heart."

"Oh, spare me a homily on Miss Temple's perfections, I entreat," said Emma, with curling lips. "I have already had them thrust upon me to a sickening extent since I have been here. When she leaves, as the wife of her adorer, perhaps I shall stand some chance to win my way with you and my uncle. As long as she is here I need make no effort to do so, as it would hardly be crowned with success."

"You elect to remain here, then?" asked her aunt.

"Of course. What else can I do, if you refuse to help me? I could not live on my means as my father's daughter should."

Mrs. Tardy smiled faintly, but her reply was interrupted by the entrance of her husband and Agnes, who had been out walking together.

Emma went to her own room after this passage-at-arms with her aunt, and when there

she stood a moment in thought, and then muttered:

"They are not engaged; he has not even committed himself in words, and if I can prevent it he never shall."

CHAPTER IV.

"The mind that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows,
And maddening in its ire.
So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoomed for Heaven;
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death!" BYRON.

AFTER this conversation between the aunt and niece, Manvers came again and again, but Emma found all her arts unavailing to attract him from the object of his affection. She had a suitor of her own—a silent, satirical man, whose efforts to recommend himself to her were met with almost scornful rudeness.

Mr. Kirke was not handsome; he was the next heir to a rich uncle, but as he had little fortune of his own, Miss Crofton considered it extremely presumptuous in him to aspire to the possession of herself and her thousands.

Ambitious and avaricious, she had often declared that she would never accept any man who could not give her high position or great wealth.

She admitted to herself, however, that if no millionaire sought her, she might be tempted to give her hand to one who was in a fair way to become one through his own energies.

Twice in her life she had thought herself quite sure of the acquisition of all she deemed requisite to her happiness; but on the eve of the fulfilment of her hopes, the selfishness of her father caused a most bitter and humiliating disappointment.

Mr. Crofton had the entire control of the estate left by his wife, with the exception of the provision settled on his daughter at the time of her decease.

That was a mere bagatelle to the extravagant and impoverished aristocrats on whom her choice in both instances had fallen, and when her father refused to add to her fortune, the marriages fell through.

On the evening on which Manvers and his friend were expected, Miss Crofton made a brilliant toilet; she had her hair dressed in the last Parisian style by the skilful fingers of her maid, Fifiue, who brightened the pallid complexion of her mistress by a faint touch of rouge so skilfully applied as to wear the semblance of a natural flush.

Miss Crofton had heard a great deal of Brenton, and his remarkable talent for business. She had heard it predicted of him that in the time to come he would be one of the most successful men in the empire city. As all her arts had failed to win on Manvers, she thought the next best thing she could do would be to win his partner, and thus gain a position which might enable her to ruin the man who had slighted her advances and remained true to his first choice, in spite of all her blandishments.

On this morning her heart was full of bitterness toward Agnes, though she smiled on her more sweetly than usual, and even talked with her in a friendly, half confidential manner.

Much of her satisfaction arose from the contrast in her own rich toilet, and the simple summer muslin worn by Agnes on that bright June evening, with no ornament save a flower in her shining hair, and another at her breast. The two were on the veranda, which extended on one side from the vestibule, and Emma, after glancing over the bright, fresh-looking figure of her rival, patronisingly said:

"You look very nice indeed, Agnes; but I wonder that my aunt does not dress you more expensively. She is quite able to do it, and as fond of you as she is, I am surprised that she is not more liberal."

Agnes flushed slightly, and with some hauteur said:

"I think you misunderstand my position here, Emma. I am not dependent upon your aunt. I have a hundred a year of my own—quite,

enough to live on respectably if I had to find a home for myself. I live with my uncle because I can be of use to him, and because both he and his wife are so very—very kind to me. As to my dress, my mother taught me that neatness and becomingness are more important than richness of apparel. I always try to be suitably dressed, and living as quietly as we do, expensive toilets would seem in bad taste. With me at least," hastily added; "but with you it is different—you have been accustomed to a style of life far different from the one we lead here."

"That is true," said Miss Crofton, complacently; "and I sometimes wonder how I can endure this humdrum existence. I must beg your pardon for the mistake I made. Seeing you so attentive to my aunt, I naturally thought that you made yourself useful to her as an equivalent for what she could give you. I am really glad to know that you have something of your own."

Agnes raised her clear eyes to the face of the speaker, and gravely asked:

"Do you think it impossible for love to be disinterested? I have never thought of what your aunt might do for me—I ask nothing of her but affection, and that she lavishes on me as tenderly as if she were my own mother. I am grateful to her, therefore I seek to please her."

"Ah! bah! all that is very well, but you must know that if she lives long she will have something handsome laid by; for she makes every edge cut, though she does not stint the house, I must say. You know, of course, that I am the heiress of this place—to everything, in fact, except her savings, which will be worth having. Of course she is saving to give to your uncle, and equally of course all he gets will eventually be yours."

Agnes changed colour several times while she thus spoke; when Emma paused, the gentle dignity with which she replied impressed even the selfish and obtuse nature she had to deal with.

"You know very little of uncle, Miss Crofton, if you think that he would enrich his own niece at the expense of his wife. He is the soul of honour, and fastidiously alive to what is due to his own sense of integrity. Whatever your aunt may give him, should he be so unfortunate as to survive her, will be scrupulously restored to you at his death. Nor would I consent to accept from him any portion of the fortune which you regard as your right. It must go back, so far as I am concerned, to the family it came from."

Her companion regarded her with surprise, evidently mingled with incredulity.

"You cannot be in earnest, Agnes. Whatever the law gives us we have the right to take, and I, for my own part, should not hesitate to do so in this case if our positions were reversed. Though I should certainly think it unjust, if your uncle were to die first, and my aunt still gave you what she had it in her power to alienate from me."

With decision, Agnes replied:

"You need have no uneasiness on the score of the few hundreds Aunt Tardy may have to dispose of when— Oh, Emma, it is dreadful to me to speculate in this way on the loss of one who is dear to us, and how much it may profit ourselves! I have never before thought of my aunt's death but as a great calamity, for she is one of the best of women, and I love her very dearly."

"And you are taking me to task for my mercenary spirit," said Emma, frigidly. "I understand that, but I will not resent it. Aunt Sarah wishes us to be more friendly, and I have made advances to you to be repelled in this way. I said nothing to induce you to believe that I am grudging length of life to the only relative I have. You put your own interpretation on my words."

"Oh, forgive me, Emma. I spoke from the impulse of feeling, and I did not mean to be unkind to you. Let us dismiss this subject for ever; but rest assured, let what will happen, that I shall never wrong you by taking from you what you consider yours."

This assurance somewhat mollified Miss Crofton, and she graciously said:

"I forgive you for misjudging me, Agnes, and now let us talk of more agreeable things. Let us try to be better friends than we have hitherto been. I confess that I have been unjust to you, for I thought you a dependent, and one who was seeking to gain influence over my aunt for purposes of your own. I was wrong, I find, and I ask your pardon for imputing to you motives which I now feel assured you are incapable of acting on."

She held out her hand, and Agnes took it almost reluctantly; for with her fine intuitions she felt that this was a hollow compact on the part of this worldly-wise woman, and that some scheme of her own lay hidden behind it.

She gravely said:

"I hope now that you understand me better than to believe I would take advantage of Aunt Tardy's kindness to me, that you will like me better, and—"

Miss Crofton finished the incomplete sentence when she hesitated:

"And treat you with the civility that is due to you. That is what was in your mind, though you hesitated to express it. I know that I have often been rude to you, and I am sorry for it. Let bygones be bygones, and we will be better friends in the future."

"I am quite willing. Living on ill terms with anyone in the same house is like a discord in music which mars the beauty of the whole composition. Domestic life should be without jars, if it comes up to the poet's description as the only good which has survived the fall of man. Our little differences have, I know, clouded the serenity of the good old couple who have accepted us as their children, and I am more than glad to reconcile them."

Emma spread the exquisitely painted fan she carried in her hand, and raised it to her face to conceal the smile of mockery which flitted over her thin lips.

She had ends of her own to gain by this hollow peace, and she thought she had completely deceived the frank and artless girl beside her by this show of penitence for her former insolence.

She hated her for her youth, for the charm which brought old and young to her feet, and above all did she hate her because Julian Manvers believed her to be the only woman in the world for him; because he was coming there that evening, in all probability, to ask her to become his wife.

Yet she concealed it all, and presently began to talk in her best manner of things she had seen which could interest her companion.

As twilight fell around them and the golden glamour of a lovely sunset faded away, Emma suddenly said:

"Our guests are late coming. I hope that no accident has happened to the train. There, my dear, you need not grow so pale; if one did occur, so active a man as your best friend would be almost sure to escape."

"I am not alarmed, and I was not conscious of changing colour. The road is considered a safe one, I believe, and I think I heard the whistle of the locomotive a quarter of an hour ago. Our guests will soon be here now."

"Ah! yes; two are coming this time. By the way, tell me if Mr. Brenton is as handsome and distinguished in appearance as Mr. Manvers, and why it is that he has never brought his friend to Selwood before?"

"Which question shall I answer first?" asked Agnes, laughing.

"In their regular order, of course."

A slight flush came into the face of the young girl, as she said:

"Julian Manvers is an exceptionally handsome man, as you know, and Mr. Brenton, who is but slightly known to me, is simply a gentlemanly-looking person, who is always extremely well dressed. He is neither tall nor short, but his figure is well made. He is dark, with black eyes and hair, and has a very shrewd, sensible face. People who know him say that he is bound to be one of the successful men of the day. His friend and partner estimates him very highly."

"Very well done—I think I can see him. And now, why has he held himself aloof so long? Was it that Mr. Manvers feared he might try to play the agreeable to you? You need not blush, for no one knows better than you how devoted he is to you, and how jealous he might be of another pretender to your favour."

The colour of Agnes deepened, but she steadily said:

"I think it is his own fault that Mr. Brenton has not made us a visit before this. I do not think that he is very partial to ladies' society. He cares chiefly for pushing his interests on in the world, and I have the impression that he is only a man of business. Money must be an absorbing passion with a man who gives up all the joy and sweetness of life to accumulate it. Yet I have no right to assert that Mr. Brenton belongs to that class, for I really know very little of him."

"Only a man of business" repeated Emma. "What better could he be in this land of equal rights, and assured fortune to him who can fight his own battles with tact and prudence? winning golden rewards while he is yet young enough to enjoy the fruits of his industry? You speak very contemptuously of money, Agnes, but of what worth is life without it?—aye, and plenty of it too."

"I was not aware that I had committed so great a heresy as that," replied Agnes, laughing. "I only expressed my surprise that its accumulation should be the first object in the life of any man who is capable of better things—the one absorbing interest of an immortal creature, who has but a span of life in which to enjoy his gains. But here comes the carriage, and you will soon be able to form your own opinion of Mr. Brenton."

The visitors alighted from the vehicle, and came together toward the flight of steps which led to the vestibule. Agnes flitted in to receive them, but Emma lingered on the veranda watching their approach, and comparing the two, with a half contemptuous curl on her lip as she marked the superiority of Manver's appearance to that of his friend.

Julian Manvers was indeed a rare specimen of masculine beauty. His tall figure was well proportioned, and he moved with the graceful ease which is the offspring of a perfect physique.

This stately form was crowned by a statuesque head, covered thickly with short, closely-curling brown hair.

His eyes were grey, with dark brows and lashes, and his nose was straight as that of a Greek profile.

A soft, silky-looking beard flowed from his chin; but he wore no moustache. The perfectly curved lips were left to speak for themselves of the genial, happy nature of their possessor.

Emma's eyes wandered from this magnificent figure to the small, dark man beside him, and she saw that Brenton was less imposing in appearance than the description of Agnes had led her to expect. This was simply due to the effect of contrast, for few men could bear a comparison with the grand-looking man who walked beside him.

Brenton's dark, astute face was in striking contrast also to the fair complexion and candid expression of his companion. He wore a heavy black beard, and a moustache which concealed the expression of his mean mouth, and the heavy moulding of his chin and jaw. These would have told their own story to a physiognomist had they been exposed to the light of day, but their owner took good care to conceal them behind the heavy growth of hair which he cultivated carefully.

Emma spitefully muttered to herself:

"Hyperion to a satyr. No—no, it's not as bad as that; but how mean-looking that small man is in comparison with the godlike figure beside him. I could have loved you, Julian Manvers, better than I ever have loved any mortal creature; but you still cling to that namby-pamby miss, and would not understand the efforts I made to win you. Never mind, sir; I will repay you yet, and cause her to rue the day she ever trusted herself to your keeping. I will do it, yes, I will, if I ruin myself in crushing you both beneath my feet."

After this outburst she stood a few moments to recover perfect calmness, and then glided into the parlour, which the guests had by this time gained, after being cordially welcomed by Agnes.

The professor and his wife were both there—the latter a well preserved woman, who looked many years younger than she was. Mrs. Tardy had never been a handsome woman, but "she had her little charm," and even in age it had not deserted her.

This consisted in a bright, frank expression of face, with a cordial graciousness of manner which rendered her universally popular.

(To be Continued.)

LOVE IN THE LANE.

A HAPPY hush our steps o'erhung.

With scarce a zephyr bustling
The fields of amber grain among
To set the greybeards rustling,
As down the lane I strayed with Bess,
Shy glances interchanging
Beneath a spell of bashfulness
That was almost estranging.

But when her waist I sought to take,
Her figure closer bringing,
A brown thrush from the hazel brake
Burst into joyous singing;
And when, unchid, a kiss I took,
Ere yet a word was spoken,
The whole world into voice awoke,
As though a spell were broken.

Then "Crinkle, crinkle!" crisped the rye,

The winds above it playing;
"Aha, aha!" in blithe reply
The barley tops were saying;
The ranks of corn, in airy glee,
Their phantom hands were clapping;
Whilst "Encore!" from a neighbouring tree

A woodpecker kept rapping.

Hot flushed her cheek, as though a throng

Of witnesses were peeping.
"To let the world know all were wrong,"

She murmured, almost weeping.
But when we drew from out the lane
Wherein I told love's story,
She smiled to think the waving grain
Should celebrate our glory.

For, mingled with the plaudits clear
That bearded ranks were calling,
There, tinkling, came unto the ear
The sound of water falling
From where the brook, with many a bound,

Its silver peal was flinging;
And soft I said: "It hath the sound
Of marriage bells a ringing."

N. D. U.

SCIENCE.

RULES FOR CALCULATING THE SPEED OF PULLEYS.

THE diameter of the driven being given, to find its number of revolutions.

Rule—Multiply the diameter of the driver by its number of revolutions, and divide the product by the diameter of the driven; the quotient will be the number of revolutions of the driven.

The diameter and revolutions of the driver being given, to find the diameter of the driven, that shall make any given number of revolutions in the same time:

Rule—Multiply the diameter of the driver by its number of revolutions, and divide the product by the number of required revolutions of the driven; the quotient will be its diameter.

The rules following are but changes of the

same, and will be readily understood from the foregoing examples.

To ascertain the size of the driver:

Rule—Multiply the diameter of the driven by the number of revolutions you wish to make, and divide the product by the required revolutions of the driver; the quotient will be the size of the driver.

To ascertain the size of pulleys for given speed:

Rule—Multiply all the diameters of the drivers together and all the diameters of the driven together; divide the drivers by the driven; the answer multiply by the known revolutions of the main shaft.

CLEANSING FLUID.—For washing alpaca, camel's hair, and other woollen goods, and for removing marks made on furniture, carpets, rugs, &c.: Four ounces ammonia, four ounces Castile soap, two ounces alcohol, two ounces glycerin, two ounces ether. Cut the soap fine, dissolve in one quart water over the fire, and add four quarts water. When nearly cold add the other ingredients. This will make nearly eight quarts and will cost but a few pence. It must be put in a bottle and stoppered tight. It will keep good any length of time. To wash dress goods, take a pail of lukewarm water, and put in a teacupful of the fluid, shake around well in this, and then rinse in plenty of clean water, and iron on wrong side while damp. For washing grease from coat collars, &c., take a little of the fluid in a cup of water, apply with a clean rag, and wipe well with a second rag. It will make everything wooden look bright and fresh.

CHANGE OF THE EARTH.—The earth's axis and its inclined position seem to depend upon attraction of gravitation, or magnetism in the direction of the north star. Such an attraction to be permanent must be exerted upon the mineral portion of our globe, and we find the greatest amount of land in the northern hemisphere; but the corroding agencies before alluded to are gradually wearing it away, and, in obedience to the law of centrifugal force, this debris is gradually finding its way to the periphery or equator; hence we find our northern shores rock bound coasts, and as we approach the equator, sandy flats. The same peculiarity exists in the southern hemisphere. The diameter of the earth at the equator is 20 miles greater than at the poles. The water exhibits the greatest parts of this distention, and forms a belt from 5 to 10 miles in depth around the earth at the line. To what extent the mineral deposits have accumulated there we cannot tell; but whenever they shall have accumulated to such an extent at any point of the equator as to exceed that in the northern hemisphere, that part will gravitate towards the north or polar star, opposite points on our present equator will become the new poles, or axis in doing so, this great belt of water in finding its new position will sweep over one half the globe, a quarter upon each side, thus causing another deluge, throwing up new mountain ranges, burying continents and elevating others, bringing arctic regions into tropical climes and portions of our present equator into arctic frosts. This, like all the preceding revolutions of our planet, will be sudden and violent.

FILLING FOR CRACKED CEILINGS.—Whiting mixed with glue water or calcined plaster and water makes a good putty for filling cracks in plastered ceilings.

FIRE AND WATER PROOF PAINT.—Slake stone lime by putting into a tub, covered to keep in the steam; when slaked pass the powder through a sieve, and to every six quarts add a quart of rock salt and a gallon of water; then boil and skim clear; to every five gallons of the liquid add pulverised copperas half a pound, and stir slowly; add powdered potash three-quarters of a pound, then very fine sand or hickory ashes four pounds; then use any colouring matter desired, and apply with a brush. It looks better than ordinary paint, and is as durable as slate; will stop small leaks in roofs, prevent moss from growing thereon, make it incombustible, and render brick impervious to water.



[THE FATAL ANNOUNCEMENT.]

WHO DID IT?

OR,
THE WARD'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oh, speak, ye ghosts of the dead,
Oh, whither are ye gone to rest?
In what cave of the hills shall we find thee?
No feeble voice is on the gale departed—
No answer half drowned in the storm.

It was a fearful awakening for Viola Devaux in the morn of that night of horrors. She had sunk to sleep, as must inevitably be the case, unless actual disease fevers the brain, after some weary hours of tossing to and fro on the uneasy pillow.

But what a slumber!

Troubled, fitful, haunted by thrilling dreams of agony, from which she kept starting to yet more distressing, waking visions. She blamed herself for the innocent and enforced oath she had taken.

The pressure that had been put upon her, the certain death she had escaped, were in her present mood a very poor excuse for the pledge to conceal the murderer's sin.

She forgot that had she sacrificed her life it would only have been an effectual veil to the crime and its author.

All that was present to her mind was the consciousness that she had pledged her solemn oath to shelter the miserable criminal at any cost, and under any circumstances.

As yet she knew not even the name and the identity of the victim of her guardian's passion. All that was concerning her at that moment was the terrible bond she had assumed, and the guilt of its rupture.

Could she maintain that reticence which she had sworn to preserve under any temptation and any circumstances?

That was her present task, and the young, innocent girl thus burdened with a load that would have been heavy for one experienced in the world and its ways, sank on her knees by her bedside in helpless dependence on the Almighty's support.

"Help me in every emergency, under any pressure to keep my solemn oath," she breathed, rather than said. "Forgive me if I have sinned in yielding to the demand, and do, in Thy own time, bring the truth to light, which I in my weakness have sworn to conceal. Thou canst dispense with human instruments to accomplish Thy purpose, and in Thee and Thee alone is my hope and trust."

Such was Viola's agonised prayer. Some might scoff at its faith, others blame its pleading trust and penitence, but it would be heard on high and answered in His good time and way, who makes good come out of evil and requiteth to every man according to his works.

Viola had scarcely risen from her humble petition when a tap at the door was followed by the entrance of her maid Louise.

The very aspect of the girl had become hateful to her since the preceding night.

Treachery seemed to work in her bright black eyes, and the tones of her pretty piquant lips, yet there were a hundred reasons why she should conceal her dislikes and suspicions for the moment.

The Abigail did not look troubled in the least. Evidently she had not heard of any occurrence to give ground for apprehension as yet.

So Viola augured, and she began a tremulous conversation with a desperate hope that she might have exaggerated the past like a hideous nightmare.

"Are they all up, Louise? It seems late. Perhaps I have overslept myself."

"No, Miss Devaux, I think not. The bell has not sounded, and I have not seen any of the family out of their rooms yet. Indeed I rather fancy there were late hours kept by others besides yourself, Miss Viola," she added, significantly.

"It was sadly foolish, and worse of me to listen to such idle jests, Louise. I tell you candidly I regret it very much, and I desire that you will never allude to it again," she replied, with more dignity than she had yet assumed in her relations with her maid.

Louise looked doubtfully at her.

"I am very sorry, Miss Viola, but I really did consider I was only doing my duty in giving you the choice. I did not attempt to influence you, and it is hardly fair to turn on me now as the one guilty," she went on, with an appearance of injured self-esteem.

"No, Louise, no. I blame no one but myself," returned Viola, "but I wish to warn you that I forbid any such messages to be delivered to me in future."

"On no account—under no circumstances, Miss Viola?" said Louise, significantly.

It was a perplexing point.

Was it really so? Would she risk the chance that some opportunity of saving life and fame should be lost to her?

And yet, how was she to make her displeasure fully understood without such prohibition?

"Unless it seems to be a matter of life and death, I do, Louise," she said, firmly. "No idle admirers, no—nor true lover shall be able to boast of such facilities. You are no idiot, Louise, and you will leave my service, without any further warning or trial, if you transgress again."

Louise gave a sarcastic though outwardly respectful assent.

"Idle admirers and true lovers make up a maiden's life in any rank, Miss Viola. If you reject all I don't know what is to be the result, but I will do my best to distinguish between the true and the false, or rather the favoured and the hated, but as I once before told you it might be wiser to make a friend than a foe of me, Miss Devaux."

Could she doubt such an assurance? Was it wise to discard such an ally in that household of foes.

Poor girl. No wonder that she paused and

temporised somewhat, and that the starting tears even more than the conciliatory words reassured Louise as to the empire that she had endangered, either by folly or intrigue.

The youth and the sadness of the fair sufferer gave her still an advantage that it needed both time and experience to forfeit entirely as it might well deserve.

The breakfast bell rang ere the toilette was completely finished, and the slight tremor that it occasioned in its hurried completion gave a slight bloom to Viola's white cheeks as she descended to the saloon.

She gave a hasty glance round as she entered. Mr. Leclerc was there, and Pauline. But one chair was empty.

That of Reginald Waldegrave. Viola shuddered at the vacancy.

Yet it might only betoken that the young man was tardy in his appearance, as was by no means an extraordinary case, or if he did not appear there was still the doubt as to its cause.

Was he the victim or the criminal—at least the accomplice in the terrible deed? She looked eagerly in her guardian's face to discern if possible his real emotions. But it was too carefully schooled.

The impassive features did not betray any inward agitation. The very voice was calm and unchanged in its accents. The hands did not tremble as they lifted the delicate china to his lips.

Could it be a hideous dream? Was there really blood on those firm, careless hands?

Was his nature so hardened that it could not betray one tinge of remorse for so black a crime?

"Where is Mr. Waldegrave, I wonder," said Pauline, as the unusually tedious meal proceeded.

"I really cannot say, my dear. It is not for us to watch our guest's actions. He may have gone out early, or breakfasted in his own room. That would be at his own free will," returned Mr. Leclerc.

The stake was tremendous, no doubt, or else he was innocent.

Nothing else could account for such calm, stoic self-mastery.

So even the inexperienced Viola felt, as she sat awaiting the bitter end.

"You are very silent, Viola. Are you also uneasy about Mr. Waldegrave's absence?" asked her guardian, with daring sang-froid.

Viola was roused to indignation by the taunt.

"Yes, sir, I am surprised, at least. I do think Mr. Waldegrave should be sought for," she said, firmly; "it is the first time such a thing has occurred."

"I am fully competent to decide," he answered, coldly. "However, there cannot be much delay now. When they clear away the breakfast I will give proper orders."

The two girls awaited the moment with equal silence but very different feelings. One feared, the other despaired the tidings that would be brought.

But the suspense was ended more quickly than they anticipated.

Ere Mr. Leclerc had finished his leisurely meal the door opened and a terrified domestic rushed into the room.

"Sir, sir, Mr. Waldegrave is—"

"Silence, fellow! Hold your confounded tongue!" thundered Mr. Leclerc. "What have these ladies to do with the vagaries of a young man? Pauline, my love, retire. It is probably no tale for female ears."

"I will!—I must know it!" said the girl, in a husky voice of terror. "Speak, Turner. What has happened? Is Mr. Waldegrave killed?" she said, hoarsely.

Perhaps she only imagined such extreme horror to have them contradicted.

The man shook his head mournfully, and she felt that it was only too true.

"Where? How?" interposed Mr. Leclerc, suddenly assuming another style, and placing his arm round the form of his daughter, as if to anticipate the result of such agitation as the answer would produce.

"On the beech, sir, in the Fistral Bay, murdered by some smuggler, I should say, poor young gentleman. But it's hard to say yet," faltered the man.

A shriek, a groan, escaped the labouring bosom of Pauline.

Then she sank on her father's bosom with a hopeless weight that he could scarcely support, and that sent a chill to his own hardened heart.

"Take her away. She is too sensitive, my own sweet, injured darling," he said, to Viola. "Those have much to answer for who brought her to this," he added, sternly. "And they will have their reward."

Viola did not trust herself to reply. She rang the bell with a force that soon brought assistance.

She could not bring herself to touch the hand of that blood-stained man, and it was not until Pauline had been removed from his grasp that she hastened to her succour.

"Is he dead? Are you sure that he is dead?" she added, in a last despairing hope as she followed those who had come to the insensible girl's aid.

"Quite, Miss Viola. He was cold when the fishermen found him. He must have been dead some hours, poor young gentleman. They are bringing him up to The Wilderness, and I first ran before to make sure, you see, sir," he added, deprecatingly to his master, from whom he doubtless expected a severe reprimand for the mischief he had worked.

But Mr. Leclerc was either unusually placable or else stunned by the magnitude of the calamity.

"You have been very imprudent, however, but there is some excuse under such terrible circumstances," he returned. "Now we must consider how to act for the best. Let the unhappy young man be taken into the billiard-room, it is further away from the inhabited part of the house, and more suitable for the duties that will have to be performed. Are they at hand?" he said, with no more tremor in his low tone than might have been expected had the whole affair been utterly indifferent to him, and only a tragedy such as the most hardened would have looked on with a shudder.

"I see them coming, sir. It's well the young ladies are away," said Turner, his own face pallid, and his teeth chattering under the horror of the bloody procession that was so rapidly approaching.

"Go and tell them my orders, and I will be there as soon as I have had time to think of the necessary arrangements," said his master, calmly.

Turner obeyed tremblingly.

Mr. Leclerc waited until he was out of sight and then hastened to the sideboard and poured out a small glass of the brandy that he took from its recesses.

It somewhat restored the numbed circulation that was fast threatening to master even his stern resolution.

It must be met and at once, were he guilty or innocent.

Whatever were the circumstances that had led to that fearful deed of blood he would be lost if he were not true to himself now.

Paul Leclerc gave one terrible gasp for breath, one clench of the hand—one more draught of the cordial that seemed powerless to do aught save warm his icy blood, and then he walked firmly from the room towards the outer building, which had been converted by him to the modern and amusing use of a billiard-table.

Stern and rigid as the corpse of the unfortunate victim, he awaited the coming of the awe-stricken group.

He had, perhaps, rather the air of one who was anticipating some fearful operation to which he would rather submit unflinchingly than the scared anxiety of one who had just received so terrible a shock.

"It was awful to see him," observed one of the domestics, who, half hidden, contemplated his statuesque figure; "he looked for all the world like the 'Queen Elizabeth's rock' cut out

of stone, more than a living man. It might have been his son, he was so bad."

"Perhaps he meant him to be so," said his companion. "And it was for Miss Pauline's sake he took on so. I'd wager she'll not get over it in a hurry."

The form of him who had been not twenty-four hours before insatiate with life and health, and spending his energies on the favourite game to which the room was devoted, was now brought slowly in and laid reverently on the temporary bed which that long smooth board afforded.

Paul Leclerc gave one involuntary shudder, and then he resolutely drew back the cover that had been thrown over the pallid face of the corpse, and gazed on it.

His hand touched the cold brow as he did so, and there was apparently a momentary movement of the closed eyelids.

But it scarcely could have been determined by the closest observer whether it was so, whether the act was voluntary or the accidental touch of the fingers that came in contact with them.

In any case, it brought a passing flush, a contraction that amounted to agony on the features that bent over the dead.

Would Paul Leclerc have recalled him to life at that moment if possible?

Perhaps he could scarcely have answered the question even to himself.

In any case, he would certainly have given the best year of his life to have cast the whole events of the last few weeks into a complete oblivion, to retroact that interval and all that it had brought of sorrow and sin.

The first words that he uttered were of a strange purport.

"We must send for a doctor, and a lawyer—I mean a detective officer," he said, "and without delay."

The man who had taken the lead in the whole affair, and who was indeed the most prominent of the humbler but long descended sons of the soil, looked doubtfully at him.

"Can't see the use of a doctor, sir," he replied. "The poor young gentleman's dead enough, and there's no need for a doctor to tell us. It's more sense to get a constable who might look into the murder; and then, there's the coroner, you see, sir, ought to be told. It's more wiselike than to bring a surgeon to a dead man."

It was perhaps a bold thing to say, and if the speaker had been in the least dependent on the master of The Wilderness there would have been a crushing reply.

But as it was, Mr. Leclerc was more willing to submit to the advice than to resent it.

"True—in a way, Mitchell," he replied, "but not altogether. It will be necessary and desirable for a surgeon to inspect the body as it at present lies, and to that end I shall now lock the door and seal it in your presence, so that there should be no question as to any tampering with the corpse either from good motives or from curiosity. That done not a moment must be lost in sending for the proper authority."

He proceeded to carry out his intention without flinching or hesitation.

The door was secured by a large seal stamped by his own signet, the key removed from the lock, and placed carefully in Mitchell's possession.

"Now," he said, "I hold you responsible, my good friend, for the safe custody of the unhappy dead till we can transfer it to official and competent hands."

The man gave an astonished look, but he still did not refuse the trust.

"He's a cool one, that's certain," remarked the same meditative domestic who had formerly spoken. "One would think he'd had such things to deal with all his life, and been in the detective force himself; but it may be that he's afraid of poor Miss Pauline wanting to go in. I haven't been waiting at table all these weeks for nothing since Mr. Waldegrave's been here, and she's over head and ears in love with him, poor young lady, I'll be bound."

"Turner's had some private hints," laughed the footman; "he's not so thick with the lady's maid without fishing out secrets, and if the one won't the other will. Louise is wary enough, I

expect, but Charlotte's easy enough to bring to book, as we all know."

There was a general smile in the group where this little dialogue took place.

The belief that Miss Leclerc's maid was quite passé enough to buy at any price the attentions of the good-looking butler was general in the servants' hall, and it was to that the point of the jest belonged.

But the occasion was too serious for any obvious mirth, and the various errands on which the servants were despatched soon divided them too effectually for further comments at the present.

CHAPTER XIV.

She turned from her watch on the lonely tower
In haste to reach the hall,
And as she sprang down the winding stair—
She heard the drawbridge fall;
A hundred harps their welcome rang,
Then paused as if in fear;
The lady entered the hall and saw
Her true knight stretched on his bier.

MIS VIOLA, will you not come to my poor young lady? She is in such a terrible way," said Charlotte Meadows, tapping sharply at the door of the ward's apartment.

Viola had left the room to which Pauline had been conveyed, directly the poor girl had been returned to consciousness. She felt that she could bear no more at the moment.

Her terrible secret still weighed like a cold, hard burden on her heart, numbing the very vitals, and yet torturing her nerves by a vague terror, a consciousness of remorse and wrong, albeit her conscience in its truthful judgment acquitted her from such self-reproach.

"What in truth did she know? What had her eyes seen, had she been put on her oath at the instant? Nothing which was really tangible as proof before the law, but alas, poor Viola, enough to make her certain that in the eyes of Him there had been a fearful crime, of which the shadow must ever rest on her future life if that oath was indeed binding, as the tenderness of her pure conscience must make it."

No wonder that she sought solitude after the first alarm for Pauline had passed, and that she almost envied the insensibility from which she had assisted to rouse the sufferer.

Meadows' summons was almost like a voice to a somnambulist in rousing her from that stunning reverie.

She felt that it was at once impossible and cruel to refuse, and she shortly opened her door and passed from her room to the distant apartments of Pauline.

There was a passing glimpse of the scene of the last night's tragedy as she walked along the corridor, that made her shiver as if an east wind blast had pierced her.

Then she summoned up resolution to deaden as it might be called the sharp pang, and in another moment she was in Pauline's room.

The girl was sitting wildly up in the bed where she had been placed, in the hope that it would effectually prevent any further attempts to leave her chamber, and quiet her shattered nerves.

But it only gave a more troubled, fevered agony to the expression and attitude than if she could have relieved it by physical movement.

"Viola, where is he? What have you heard? Who did it?" she said, seizing Viola's hand and holding it, as if it were in a vice, while her eyes literally glared on her friend, as if they would burn into her very soul.

Viola covered her own face with her other hand, as she replied:

"Dearest Pauline, calm yourself. Nothing is known yet, nothing," she said.

The girl shook her head.

"Viola, I will know. I will never rest till I do know, and my blight shall rest on the murderer, whoever he may be," she returned, fiercely, the excitement giving force and intensity to the usually feminine form and features.

"Hush, hush! in mercy, hush?" returned Viola, persuasively. "Pauline, it can do no

good, it can but bring greater misery to speak thus."

And she cast herself on her knees by the bedside, and hid her working features in the clothes at she spoke.

"I will not hush," exclaimed Pauline, violently. "It is all very well for you, Viola, whom I believe have suspicions of the truth, or you would not look so scared and miserable. Why should you? How dare you mean him as I do? He did not love you—you dare not pretend that he did, and you—you would not be so bold and forward as to love him—my own—my Reginald—my idol!" she went on, passionately, the words rushing like a torrent from her lips, and the feverish crimson mantling her face.

"I—no—no," returned, Viola, bitterly. "You need not fear that, Pauline."

"Fear!" repeated the girl, in jealous passion; "why should I fear? Do you not know that I was his—his own—that we were betrothed, and that he who has murdered him has plunged a dagger in my heart? I will be avenged; yes! yes! There shall be no pity—no mercy for him who has been the guilty criminal! Oh, may it return a thousand times on his head! May he suffer torture till his last hour!" she pursued, wildly.

"Pauline, forbear. You know not what you say," said Viola, piteously.

"Ah, I see it all! You know—you believe that it is that serpent, Neville Grantley, he who came wriggling himself in—when you received so lovingly. It is he—yes, or you would not look so wretched and speak so barbarously."

"Pauline, be composed—you are saying what you will repent. It is not Mr. Grantley. I am sure—I am sure of it as of myself," she burst out impetuously, goaded by those unjust ravings.

"You said you did not know. How can you say that, then?" said Pauline, scornfully. "Oh, I am so miserable. I am mad—I shall die, and all for this fiend in human shape who has worked this crime," she went on, striking with each word fresh pangs into the innocent breast of the pitiful, fair young listener.

There was silence for a few moments.

Pauline seemed exhausted by the violence of her ravings, and Viola waited in half-stunned meekness to seize some opportunity of calming her ungoverned spirit.

She collected her powers at length so as to speak with more deliberate and firm effect.

"Pauline, my poor darling, listen to me," she said, in her sweet, plaintive accents. "He knows the truth of this wretched tragedy. He alone can bring it to light, and he, in his own time, will work out the retribution as it may deserve. It is not for us to take his office from him. Let us ask him for the comfort and strength we need rather than bring fresh blights on our heads."

The sweet softness of her look and tone, the fervent pressure of her hand, the tears that rolled silently down her cheeks, were in themselves a pleading for the arguments she used.

In a few moments they seemed to have some effect upon the frenzied sufferer.

"Viola—Viola, it is all very well for you to talk thus; you cannot feel as I do. You have not lost a lover—at least, not—why are you false—false?" she went on, jealously.

"I am not false, but am stricken to the heart," burst from Viola's lips. "Pauline, are you not unjust? Can you not believe me?—who am perhaps more able to think and judge than you are at this moment. I tell you from my heart that you will but suffer a hundred times more if you will not subdue this bitterness. For your own sake I implore—I entreat—I kneel to you to retract the words you have spoken, lest it may return on your own head!"

Pauline's eyes were fixed on her questioningly, and there was something almost of the doubting, misty meditation of insanity in her expression as she listened.

"Tell me why—I do not comprehend," she said.

"It is the teaching of the Lord Himself," said Viola, evasively, "and tell you know whom it is that you are thus condemning, and all that led to this fearful crime, you know not, you cannot

tell what thunderbolts you are imploring and on whom they may fall."

"It matters not. My poor, poor, dearly loved—my idol—my own," she murmured, burying her face and writhing in the agony of her soul. "And—and why should not the misery be poured out on him who makes me suffer this? The noble, and good, and beautiful, and happy. Reginald—Reginald, you must, you shall be avenged at any cost, in any way."

Viola groaned. The whole terrible tragedy was too fresh on her mind not to shudder under such unconscious threats, such blind resentment. Then she remembered the actual uncertainty of the whole affair.

How was she to decide absolutely as to the criminal in the guilty deed?

She had, perhaps, but too certain grounds for her belief.

Her guardian's acts and words could scarcely be mistaken.

Still she had not been a witness of the murder.

She had not seen with her eyes what she still believed in her innermost heart.

Why should she load her breast with a needless burden?

Why accept the office of a detective when it had been so pure an accident that had given her any knowledge of the terrible scene.

Perhaps a vague, unshaped consciousness, a presentiment of coming ill might influence the orphan.

But at present it was simply an alternative between a desperate resolve to break, as it were, the trammels that bound her, or risk unquestioningly all that might ensue in default of divulging such knowledge as she possessed.

"Would that I had dared all, that I had died," she murmured to herself, as she turned to the window for a brief respite from the ordeal she was suffering. "Who would have missed me? What blank should I have left?"

There was one image that rose to her view—one name that rose to her lips, but she crushed it back.

It were too fatally connected with the very source of her trouble.

Had it not been for that clandestine note she should not have been there, and her wretched participation in the scene been avoided.

But Viola's nature was too good and too true to indulge long in such morbid fancies, there was a higher purpose it might be in the apparent accident.

The lives and the innocence of others might thus be in her keeping.

Should she yield weakly and be false and unworthy of the trust reposed in her by the disposal of an unerring Providence.

The girl gave one fervent petition to the Almighty arbiter of events, and then calmly and unselfishly addressed herself to the task before her, and the duty that might yet be in store for her downcast and sorely tried person.

(To be Continued.)

RULES FOR THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

THE following rules from the papers of Dr. West, according to his memorandum, are thrown together as general waymarks in the journey of life:

Never ridicule sacred things, or what others may esteem as such, however absurd they may appear to you.

Never show levity when people are engaged in worship.

Never resent a supposed injury till you know the views and motives of the author of it. And on no occasion relate it.

Always to take the part of an absent person, who is censured in company, so far as truth and propriety will allow.

Never to think worse of another on account of his differing from me in politics and religious subjects.

Frequently to review my conduct and note my feelings.

Not to dispute with a man who is more than seventeen years of age, nor with a woman, nor any sort of enthusiast.

Not to affect to be witty, or to jest so as to wound the feelings of another.

To say as little as possible of myself and those who are near to me.

To aim at cheerfulness without levity.

Never to court the favour of the rich by flattering either their vanities or their vices.

To speak with calmness and deliberation on all occasions, especially of circumstances which tend to irritate.

FORREST HOUSE;

OR,

EVERARD'S REPENTANCE.

CHAPTER LII.

DR. MATTHEWSON was not so happy as he had expected to be at Forrest House, and he would not have been happy if the whole town of Rothsay had fallen at his feet and rendered him the homage he so much desired, for go where he would there was always in his mind a thought of Rossie, who seemed to haunt the place, and whose room he never entered or went near.

Indeed, he seemed to shun that portion of the building, and when her name was mentioned, as it sometimes was by Josephine herself, he shuddered involuntarily, and once, when questioned as to the manner of her death, and the exact nature of her sickness, the cold sweat broke out upon his face, and he asked that she might never be mentioned in his presence again.

It was more than he could bear to talk of her, he said, and for days he seemed so moody and abstracted that Josephine looked at him curiously wondering why he should be so affected, and if he really had loved his sister so much and was so sorrowful for her death.

Once he decided to fill the house with young men, but when he thought of his wife and remembered what her manner was, he gave that up, for though he had no fear that he could not by a word check anything like intimacy between his wife and another man, he had no fancy even to see the first indications of a flirtation, for his love, or rather passion, for Josephine was still strong enough to make him wish to keep her smiles and blandishments for himself; and so the guests were given up, and he spent his time driving and riding his fast horses through the country during the morning, and in the afternoon lounging, and smoking, and reading, and looking over his handsome house until his elaborate dinner, which was served at half-past six, and notice of which was given to the portion of the town nearest him by the loud bell which he caused to be rung as a signal to himself and wife that dinner was ready.

The doctor was very particular and exacting on every point of table etiquette, and required as much form, and ceremony, and attention, as if a multitude of guests sat daily at his board, instead of Josephine, who was always elegantly dressed in silks, and laces, and diamonds, and looked a very queen as she took her seat at the head of the table with a languor which was not feigned, for in her heart she was tired and sick to death of the grand, lonely life she lead.

Nobody came near her, and when by chance she met any of her old acquaintances on the rare occasions when she showed herself in town, they were always too much hurried more than to bow to her; while even the tradespeople lacked that deference of manner which she felt was her due as a lady of so much style and wealth.

The doctor seldom asked her to join him in his drives, and as she did not care to go out alone and face the disapproving public, she spent her time mostly in her own room reading French novels and eating candy and bonbons, with which she was always supplied.

Everard had never met face to face, though he had seen him in the distance from her win-

dow, and watched him as he went by with a strange feeling at her heart which once wrung a few hot, bitter tears from her eyes as she remembered the summer years ago when her boy lover was all the world to her, and the life before her seemed so fair and bright.

Not that she really wanted Everard back as he was now, the cold, proud, silent man, whose glance she would rather not meet; but she wanted something; she missed something in her life which she longed for intensely, and at last made up her mind that it was Agnes, the despised sister, whom she missed and wanted so much, and who was still in Holburton, earning her own living as housekeeper for Captain Sparkes.

When they first returned to the Forrest House, and, in fact, before they reached it, Dr. Matthewson had signified to her his wish that Agnes should remain where she was. She would hardly be ornamental in his household, he said. He liked only beautiful objects around him, and Agnes was not beautiful.

She would be an ugly blot upon the picture, and he did not want her, though he was willing to supply her with money, if necessary.

But Agnes did not want his money. She could take care of herself, and was happier in Holburton than she could be elsewhere. But as the summer went by the longing in Josephine's heart for the companionship of some woman grew so strong that she ventured at last to write begging her sister to come, and telling how lonely she was without her.

"I have been very hard and selfish and wicked, I know," she wrote, "but, Aggie, I am far from being happy, and I want you here with me so much that I am sure you will come. I believe I am ill or nervous, or both, and the sight of your dear old face will do me good."

Josephine did not tell her husband of this letter, lest he should forbid her sending it. She was beginning to be a good deal afraid of him, but she thought she knew him well enough to feel sure that if Agnes were once there—in the house—he would make no open opposition to it, and she was willing to bear a good deal in private for the sake of having Agnes with her again to help make her respectable, for it had come to this that Josephine felt herself to be looked upon as an abandoned woman, and she wanted something to cling to as a drowning man clings to a straw—something to hold her up which was pure and good, as she knew her sister to be. So she wrote and directed her letter, and determined to post it herself to be sure of its safety.

She had not been in town for more than two weeks, and she dressed herself for the walk with more than usual care, but felt a pang of bitter anger and regret when she saw that, dress as she might, her Paris gown could not conceal the fact that something was gone from the roundness of her form and the freshness of her face. She was fading, more from disappointment and ennui than from age, and she knew it, and felt a greater disgust for herself and her surroundings than she had ever done before as she walked out of the house and down the avenue, little dreaming that her present condition of mind was bliss compared with what it would be when she came back again.

There had been some trouble with the clerks in the post-office at Rothsay, and two new ones had just been appointed to the post, and one of these had entered upon his duties only the day before. As he came from Dayton, and was a stranger in town, he knew very few people by sight, and was altogether ignorant of the name and antecedents of the beautiful lady, who, after depositing her letter, turned to him and asked if there was any mail for the Forrest House.

Half-bewildered with her beauty and the bright smile she flashed upon him, the clerk started and blushed, and catching only the name Forrest looked in Everard's box, where lay a letter not yet called for, as Everard had left town early that morning for a drive into the country where he had some business with a client.

It was a soiled-looking letter, with a foreign postmark upon it, and had either been mislaid a long time after it had been written, or detained upon the road, for it was worn upon the edges, and had evidently been much crumpled with frequent handling.

It was directed to J. Everard Forrest, Esq., Rothsay, and in a corner, the two words, "Please forward," were written as if the writer were in haste and thought thus to expedite matters.

Very mechanically, and even indifferently, Josephine took it in her hand, and glancing at the name saw the clerk had made a mistake and given her what belonged to another. But she saw, too, something else which turned her white as ashes and rivetted her for a moment to the spot with a feeling that she was either dying, or mad, or both.

Surely, surely, she knew that writing. She had seen it times enough not to be mistaken. And she had thought the hand which penned it dead long ago and laid away under the grass and flowers of Austria.

Rossie she tried to say, but her white lips would not move, and there was about them a strange prickling sensation which frightened her more than the numbness of her body.

"I must get into the air where I can breathe, I am suffocating here," she thought, and with a desperate effort she dragged herself to the street, taking the letter with her, and grasping it with a firm grip as if fearful of losing it, when in fact she had forgotten that she had it at all, until the air blowing on her face revived her somewhat and brought her back to a consciousness of what she was doing.

Then her first impulse was to return the letter to Everard's box, as something she ought to do, and she did turn to go back when she saw her husband just entering the office, and that decided her.

She would not let him see the letter lest worse should befall it, for if there were a great wrong somewhere, he knew it and had contrived it, and the cold sweat broke out from every pore as she began dimly to conjecture the nature of the wrong and to shudder at its enormity.

She was feeling stronger now, and fearful lest her husband should overtake her she hurried across the common, and unconsciously turned a corner into a street which would take her past Everard's office.

This was a place she had shunned as if it had been a pest-house since her return to town as Mrs. Matthewson, and she never glanced at it now in her eager haste to get home, where she could be alone to think, and maybe read the letter clutched so convulsively in her hand.

But in avoiding one evil she ran against another, for just as she left the main village, and was entering upon the broad road which lead to the gate of the Forrest Park, she saw Everard riding rapidly towards her on his return from the country.

There was nothing to do but meet him, and something whispered to her, "Give him his own"—the letter which burned her hand like fire and still seemed like the touch of dead fingers grasping hers.

But Everard was driving fast and did not notice who she was until fairly up with and passing her, when a hot flush mounted to his face, and his eyes flashed a recognition as with his in-born courtesy he lifted his hat as he would to any woman, and then passed on, leaving a cloud of dust behind him, and Josephine standing perfectly still and calling after him, for she did make the attempt and twice repeated his name, but so faintly that no sound of her voice reached his ear, and he little dreamed how near Rossie was to him in that moment of his first encounter with the woman who had been his wife, and who now went on her way feeling that she had twice tried to give up the letter, and been thwarted each time.

Surely she might read it now, and with eager haste she went to her own room on her arrival home, and, locking the door, sat down to read that letter from the dead. And as she read she felt the blood curdle in her veins; there was a humming in her ears; a thick feeling in her tongue, and a kind of consciousness that she was

somebody else, whose business for the rest of her life was to keep that letter and its contents a secret from the world.

But where should she hide it that no one could ever find it, for nobody must see it, nobody. Safety, honour, everything dear to her depended upon that. Not even her husband must look upon it or know that it was written; and where should she put it that he would not find it, for he had all her keys and took the liberty to look through her private drawers and boxes just when it pleased him to do so.

He wished to make sure that she had no love-letters from her old admirers hidden away, he had said playfully, and tapped her under the chin when he said it. But she knew it was not in play, and that hereafter all her acts must be open to him, her master.

She could not put the letter in a box or keep it about her person, and she dared not destroy it, though she made the attempt and lighted the gas in which to burn it to ashes. But as she held it to the blaze something seemed to grasp her hand and draw it back. And when she shook off the sensation of fear which had seized her and again attempted the destruction of the note, the same effect was produced, and an icy chill crept over her as if it were a dead hand clutching hers and holding it fast.

"I can't destroy it; I dare not," she whispered; "and what if somebody should find it? What if he should? He told me once that he had been guilty of every sin but murder, and under strong provocation he might be led to do even that; and a shudder of fear ran through her frame as she cast about in her own mind for a safe hiding place for the letter which affected her so strongly.

Suddenly it came to her that she could loosen a few tacks in the carpet, just where the lace curtains covered the floor in a corner of the bay-window, and pushing the letter out of sight, drive the tacks in again, and so the secret would be safe, for a time at least.

To do her justice, for once in her life conscience was prompting her to the only right course left her to pursue—give the letter to Everard and abide the consequences. But she could not make up her mind to do this, knowing that utter poverty and disgrace would be the result, and she had learned by this time that poverty with Dr. Matthewson would be a far different thing from poverty with Everard.

To hide the letter under the carpet was the work of a moment, and, unlocking the door, she was going for a hammer with which to drive the tacks, when she heard her husband's voice in the hall below and knew that he was coming.

He must not know that she held his guilty secret lest he should murder her, as in her nervousness she felt that he might do, and so she retraced her steps to the couch across the room, where she lay half fainting, and white as marble, when the doctor entered the room and asked her what was the matter.

She did not know, she said, trying to sit up and appear natural. She had been down to the village and walked rather fast, and was very warm, and had drank freely of ice-water, which made her feel as if her head were bursting.

She should probably feel better soon, if left to herself so that she could sleep.

But she did not get better, and she lay all that day and the next upon the couch, and seemed so strange and nervous that her husband called in Dr. Rider, who, after a few questions, the drift of which she understood and to which she gave false replies for the purpose of misleading him, assigned a probable natural cause for her ailments, and then went away.

Thus deceived, and on the whole rather pleased than otherwise, Dr. Matthewson was disposed to be very attentive and indulgent to his wife, with whom he sat a good portion of each day, humouring all her whims and trying to quiet her restless, nervous state of mind.

"You act as if you were afraid of me, Josie," he said once, when he sat down beside her and put his arm around her with something of the old lover-like fondness. "You tremble like a leaf if I touch you, and shrink away from me. What is it? What has come between us? You may

as well tell, for I am sure to find it out if there is anything."

She knew that, and it seemed to her as if his eyes were following hers to the bay window and seeing the letter hidden under the carpet. She must do something, say something by way of an excuse, and with her ready tact she answered him:

"I am keeping something from you. I have written Aggie to come to me. I was so lonesome and sick, and wanted her so much. You are not angry, are you?"

Her great blue eyes were swimming with real, genuine tears, for she was a little afraid of what her husband might say to the liberty she had taken without his permission. Fortunately, he was in one of his most genial moods.

Dr. Rider had said to him privately that in her present nervous condition Josephine must not be crossed; and besides this, he, too, thought Agnes might be a desirable acquisition as things were shaping themselves, and he answered laughingly that he not only was not angry, but on the contrary very glad Aggie was coming, as he believed her a capital nurse.

"Josie," he added, "you need building up. You are growing as thin as a shad, and as white as a sheet, and that I don't like. I thought you would never fade and fall off like Bee Belknap. I met her this morning, and she positively begins to look like an old maid. Do you know how old she is?"

Josephine did know that Bee was younger by a year than herself, but woman-like when another woman's age was under consideration, she answered promptly:

"She must be thirty-five at least."

The doctor did not dispute her, though he did not believe her; he merely said:

"I hear she is to be married soon," and he shot a keen quick glance at his wife, into whose pale cheeks the hot blood rushed at once, and whose voice was not quite steady as she asked:

"Married to whom? Not to Everard?"

"No-o," the doctor answered, contemptuously, annoyed at Josephine's manner. "I hope she has more sense than to marry that milksop, who has grown to be more like a Methodist parson than anything else. You called him a milksop yourself once," he continued, as he saw the flash in Josephine's eyes, "and you must not blame me for taking my cue from you, who know him better than I do. I believe, on my soul, you half feared he was going to marry, and were sorry for it. He is nothing to you. A woman cannot have two husbands; that's bigamy."

The doctor was growing irritable, and Josephine knew it, but she could not forbear answering him tartly:

"There are worse crimes than bigamy—a great deal—and they are none the less worse because the world does not know of them."

"What do you mean?" he asked, sharply, and Josephine replied:

"Nothing in particular: only you told me once that you had broken every commandment except the one 'Thou shalt do no murder,' and that you might break that under strong provocation. Of course there are some sins at your door not generally known. Suppose some one should be instrumental in bringing them or the worst of them to light?"

"Then I might break the only commandment you say I have not broken," he answered, and in the eyes bent so searchingly on Josephine's face there was an evil, threatening look before which she quailed.

She must never let him know of the letter hidden so safely under the carpet, and watched by her so carefully. Every day she went to the spot to make sure it was there, and every day she read it again until she knew it by heart, and had no need to read it except indeed to see if she had not by some chance made a mistake and read it wrong.

But she had not; the proof was there, of crime, and guilt, and sin, such as made her terribly afraid of the man who fondled and caressed her now more than he had done in weeks, and who at last welcomed Agnes when she came even more warmly than she did herself, though in not quite so demonstrative a manner.

Agnes had gone straight to her sister's room, which Josephine had not left since the day she took the foreign letter from the office and hid it under the carpet.

She had become a monomaniac on the subject of that letter, and dared not leave lest someone should find it, but sat all day in her easy-chair, which had been drawn into the bay window, and stood directly over her secret.

And there she sat when Agnes came in, glad to see her again, but sorry to find her so weak, and as if at sight of the kind old face which she knew was so true, all her remaining nerve gave way, Josephine threw her arms around her neck and sobbing out, "Oh, Aggie, I am glad you have come; I could not have borne it much longer," fainted entirely away.

If there was one thing more than another which, as a housekeeper, Agnes detested, it was carpet-bugs; those little black pests which, within a few years, have crept, nobody knows from where, into the houses in certain sections of the country, carrying with them ruin whatever they fasten upon, and dismay and wretchedness to those who will persist in hunting for them.

Among the latter class was Agnes, who, from the moment the cry of carpet-bugs was raised in Holburton, had spent half her time upon her hands and knees, searching for them on the edges of the carpets, and the rest of her time hunting them in bundles, and boxes, and drawers.

They seemed to owe her a special spite, for they had eaten her woollen shawl and her furs, and her best delaine dress, and life was becoming a burden to her, when she received Josephine's letter, begging her to come at once to the Forrest House.

Always ready at a kind word to forgive her sister for any amount of unkindness, Agnes decided at once to go, feeling that it would be some comfort at least to escape from the dreadful bugs, or black moths, as they are sometimes called.

She did not think they had yet reached Rothsay, but she meant to make it her first business to hunt for them, and equipped herself with all the ingredients named in the category for their extirpation.

(To be Continued.)

THE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE.—Until the commencement of September reports throughout the whole of the champagne districts were eminently favourable. The grapes had attained a good size, quantity was, and still is, abundant everywhere, but during the past few days an excessive quantity of rain has fallen, which has produced luxuriant foliage, the result being that the bunches of grapes are hidden by the leaves and the maturation of the grape progresses slowly.

LIVING WITHOUT FOOD.

It is true that many chronic diseases all the world over arise from eating too much. But it is possible, on the other hand, to eat too little; and we doubt whether many could maintain a healthy existence on the meagre diet of such medical philosophers as the celebrated Cornaro. How long one could contrive to live without eating anything at all, is a question of which few will be inclined to undertake the practical solution. Unfortunately, it has been solved over and over again in the case of many an accident and many a deed of cruelty.

Without something to eat or drink, man will not live beyond a few days, or at most a week. Access to water, however, makes a great difference. There is a well-known case of an Ayrshire miner who lived twenty-three days buried in a coal-mine, without swallowing anything but small quantities of a chalybeate water sucked through a straw. He had the advantage of being shut up in a contaminated atmosphere, which, by diminishing nervous sensibility, lessened the cravings of hunger.

Even more remarkable examples of prolonged abstinence might be given. Persons, indeed, have been found in coal-pits and mines, and in other

situations where there was not a mouthful of food, but where water was to be had, as long as six weeks after seclusion, still alive, though of course in a very feeble state; and a small daily allowance of food has supported life longer even than that, as in some cases of shipwreck and other accidents at sea.

Berard quotes the example of a convict who died of starvation after sixty-three days, but in this case water was taken. Cases of alleged fasting longer than this are certainly in most cases due to imposture. The insane appear to bear fasting better than those in their sober senses, and in some morbid conditions of the body nourishment may certainly be done without for a surprising length of time.

THE LADY OF THE ISLE.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE house was restored to its usual condition, and the grounds, as nearly as possible, cleared from the vestiges of the late devastation, so that the surroundings of the young heiress were once more, upon the whole, orderly and pleasant.

She returned to her usual employments, or occupied herself with the care of her invalid guest.

And with hope mixed with fear, she hourly expected the arrival of her guardian's packet.

Willful Brande, lying on his sick couch, and missing his beautiful hostess from the room, gave himself up to wonder and speculation.

He had certainly heard of L'Orient Isle, and of the good old man who ruled it, though it was as a memory of his childhood that the story now recurred.

But who, then, was this angelic girl who seemed its queen?

She knew the Headland, and had once seen his sister.

Willful at last remembered.

She must be the child of whom he had once heard Barbara speak, and who had now grown to womanhood.

But how was it that she was left alone? Had she neither parent nor guardian, or had her guardian deserted her post?

What was the meaning of her extraordinary position?

However Willful might speculate upon these questions, one thing was certain—that the bright and beautiful young face that, like an angel of healing, had beamed over his couch of pain, charming away the fever and distress, had left an impression on his youthful heart never to be erased.

Day by day, as convalescence set in, the acquaintance between the youth and maiden thus strangely thrown together, thus isolated from all the world and dependent solely upon each other for conversation and amusement, progressed towards friendship on one side and passionate love on the other.

One afternoon the youth and maiden were seated on the rude bench down on the beach, near the usual landing, watching the almost motionless surface of the water.

"Do you think that this calm can continue long, Mr. Brande?" inquired Etoile.

"I suppose not—though it may break up in another storm," replied Willful, gravely.

"Now, may the Lord in his mercy forbid!" exclaimed Etoile, fervently clasping her hands.

"So pray I! I never see a storm arise, without a sickening of the soul,—not for dread of what is coming, but in memory of what has gone! The sea has been very fatal to my race, Miss L'Orient!"

"Ah! has it been so?"—murmured the maiden, raising her eyes, full of sympathy, to his face. "I hope it was only vessels and cargoes, and not any near relative or dear friend that you lost?"

"My father, my two elder brothers, and my brother-in-law, all went down together in their

lost vessel," said the young man, sorrowfully.

"Ah, what a calamity! I can deeply feel for you, Mr. Brande," she said in a voice tremulous with emotion, as she lifted her tearful blue eyes again to his troubled face. "I can deeply feel with you, for I, too, have been a sufferer by the sea."

"You are all sympathy and benevolence, dear young lady. And you a sufferer by the sea? I grieve to hear that. But I hope you have not suffered so deeply as myself?"

"I lost my father and my grandmother. But it is true that I did not feel the loss so deeply as I ought to have done, perhaps, for I had never seen my father, and had lost sight of my grandmother for years before they died."

Willful recollected now, that Monsieur and Madame L'Orient had been lost on the "Mercury."

He scarce knew what reply to make to the earnest-hearted girl beside him.

He knew perfectly well that the loss of her father was anything but a misfortune to her; still it would never do to tell her so, nor yet would it be honest to express a condolence, not felt, upon this subject.

He contented himself with respectfully pressing her hand, and saying:

"Yes, I remember now, they were passengers on the same vessel, the 'Mercury,' in which my father, my brothers, and my poor sister's betrothed, Julius Luxmore, went down."

"Julius Luxmore!" exclaimed the maiden, in amazement.

"Yes, young lady, why should that name cast you in such a state of consternation? I beg your pardon."

"Why Julius Luxmore was not lost! he was saved!"

"Good Heaven! I had even heard such a rumour, but never believed it, and never breathed it to Barbara," thought Willful to himself.

Then aloud he inquired:

"Will you forgive the question and tell me—are you certain of the truth of that which you have just announced, young lady?"

"Assuredly, Mr. Luxmore was saved from the wreck of the 'Mercury.' He brought us the news of the death of my father and grandmother. He brought us also such of my father's effects as were picked up on the sand-bank. And above all, he brought a will which constituted him my guardian."

"Yourself?"

"Certainly. And from that time to this, excepting the three winter months of last year, Mr. Luxmore has lived exclusively with us."

"Great Heaven! what perfidy," exclaimed Willful Brande, in his heart; but from respect to his young hostess, his lips were silent.

She continued:

"Since the decease of my dear uncle, Mr. Luxmore has been my sole guardian and protector, as he will soon be my—"

She started, blushed, reflected an instant and then in a low and thrilling voice inquired:

"What was that you said about Mr. Luxmore being the betrothed husband of your sister? I adjure you by your honour to tell me—was Julius Luxmore the betrothed husband of Barbara Brande?" she went on, as Willful hesitated.

"Miss L'Orient, thus adjured, I have no choice but to reply—Yes! Julius Luxmore was the betrothed husband of Barbara Brande, with whom, without just cause, he broke faith."

"I shall not marry Mr. Luxmore—will not! cannot! I must escape from the Island. My resolution is formed," said the maiden, with sudden energy.

At this juncture a boat was pushed up on the sands, and a party consisting of Julius Luxmore and two gentlemen landed, and advanced up the avenue toward the spot where Etoile and Willful remained awaiting them.

Mr. Luxmore started and frowned at beholding a strange youth standing by the side of his jealously-guarded ward; but in a moment he regained his composure and concealed his annoyance.

Meeting the young pair, he bowed to both at

once; then greeted his young charge by name and presented to her, in turn, the Reverend Doctor Goode and Mr. Attorney Bonde.

The maiden, who had remained standing pale and firm, awaiting this encounter, responded to these introductions only by cold bows.

Then Mr. Luxmore said, in a low and courteous voice, free from any sign of the vexation he really felt, and speaking as though recalling his ward to a sense of propriety:

"Present your guest, my dear Etoile."

But before the young lady could comply, Willful Brande stepped forward, somewhat boldly, and said:

"It appears that you have forgotten your old captain's son, Mr. Luxmore?"

Luxmore started and changed colour; but instantaneously recovering his presence of mind, he exclaimed:

"Truly, my young friend, I had not at first recognised you; but, then, so many years have elapsed since we met. How are you, Mr. Brande?" and offered his hand.

But Willful drew his tall form up to its fullest height, folded his arms, and fixed a glance full of scorn steadily upon the face of the recreant.

"Why will you not take my offered hand, Willful?" inquired Luxmore, forcing a smile.

"No, sir; I take the hand of no traitor."

"What do you mean by that, sir?" exclaimed Luxmore, growing white about the lips.

"Shall I explain, sir? I am quite ready to do so," retorted Willful, scornfully.

"Oh, I do not doubt that you would force a quarrel upon me here, in the presence of a lady and a clergyman; but I have more respect for such company; another time, sir; another time!" replied the detected villain, seizing the sole pretext that presented itself for the postponement of the exposure.

"As you will," said Willful Brande, his lip curling.

"Gentlemen, move forward to the house, if you please. Etoile, my dear, take my arm. Good-afternoon, Mr. Brande," said Luxmore, with the air of dismissing Willful.

But Etoile shrank from the traitor's offered arm, and merging the bashfulness of the girl in the dignity of the lady hostess, she went around to her guest, and with a stately courtesy, said:

"Mr. Brande, will it please you to return to the house?"

Willful started, bowed, and smiled acceptance of her invitation. He then, with an air of deep respect, offered his arm.

But Etoile, with her nice sense of propriety, with a gracious smile and shake of the head, declined the proffered assistance, and walked on singly.

Mr. Luxmore came to her side, and in a low, stern voice, inaudible to other ears, inquired:

"Miss L'Orient, what is the meaning of this conduct?"

"It means, Mr. Luxmore, that before the affair proceeds further, you and myself must have a serious conversation," replied the young girl, in no degree daunted by the frowns of the unmasked perjurer, but solicitous to preserve before strangers the proprieties of peace.

"Ah, I see how it is; but do not think to escape me. An hour hence decides our destiny," muttered Luxmore, as he left her side and drew near to his guests, the clergyman and the lawyer.

They soon now reached the house. Mr. Luxmore and his friends passed into the drawing-room.

Willful Brande, feeling the awkwardness of his position, yet determined not to desert the cause of the friendless girl, threw himself on the wicker settee in the hall.

Etoile went into her own boudoir, and sat down to collect her thoughts, and nerve herself for the coming altercation with her guardian.

She had not long remained alone before the door opened, and old Moll entered, bearing a large but light handbox, which she set upon the table and opened, and from it she drew forth a splendid dress and veil.

"Come, Miss Etwill, honey, better make

haste an' ray yourself 'cause Marse Julius whispered to me, how de parson and de lawyer were a waitin', an' how he hiss'd wanted to get off from here 'fore night wid de tide."

"Go and tell Mr. Luxmore that I wish to see him here immediately, and do you also return and remain within the sound of my voice."

The old woman obeyed, and almost immediately afterward, Mr. Luxmore entered—his fair face pallid, his hazel eye glittering with excitement.

He saw at a glance—by the compressed lips, steady eyes and stern brow of Etoile that his power over her was in a great measure gone—that he would never more influence her through her love, however he might through her fears.

He did not understand that the only manner in which that young creature could be governed was through her affections or through her conscience.

Burying all these misgivings in the depths of his secretive and guileful heart, however, he resolved to take a daring course, ignoring any change, and addressing her as though nothing had happened to peril their friendship.

He advanced, holding out his hand, and saying with an affectation of joyous confidence:

"Well, my fair bride, what is your sweet capricious will with me?"

"Stand back, sir," exclaimed Etoile, recoiling and holding up her hand in deprecation of his further advance.

"What the demon do you mean by this, Miss L'Orient?" he exclaimed, stimulating astonishment and honest indignation.

"I wonder, sir, that the presence of Willful Brande on this Island does not of itself explain my meaning!" said Etoile, with dignity.

"True, by all the Cupids!" cried Luxmore, with a sardonic laugh; "during my absence to arrange the preliminaries of our marriage, a beardless boy gets himself shipwrecked on the Island, and that circumstance suffices to cause you to meet with scorn one who comes by agreement to claim your promised hand."

"Yes, Mr. Luxmore, and why?—Because it falls out in conversation that ere you offered to my acceptance a perjured heart, you basely broke faith with one of the noblest creatures that ever trod the earth—one to whom not only the ties of affection but of plighted faith, and of gratitude, should have bound you through life and unto death—your patron's daughter, Barbara Brande. You broke faith with her under circumstances that so deepen and darken the heinousness of your perjury, as to render it unparalleled in the annals of treachery. And, in one word, Mr. Luxmore, before I would give my hand in marriage to such a traitor I would thrust it into the fire and hold it there until it should be consumed to ashes!" said the maiden, with the unflinching firmness of a Mucius Scaevola.

The suddenness and the severity of this retort so astounded Julius Luxmore that for a moment he stood staring the image of consternation. When volition returned, it came borne on a tide of diabolical fury.

He grew livid in the face, his eyes started, his lips foamed, his form was convulsed; he strode towards her with his arms outstretched, and his fist clenched, exclaiming in the low, deep muttering, murderous tone of indomitable will and remorseless wickedness:

"Young woman! do you know that soul, body, and estate, you are mine, mine only, mine utterly—my slave, my property, my chattel; do you know, that as your sole guardian, and the disposer of your person and property, I have the power to imprison, chastise, or otherwise coerce you to my will? Answer me, minion, do you know this?"

The young creature drew her slight form up with queenly dignity and regarded the man before her with a look of such ineffable scorn, that, infuriate as he was, he blenched beneath her gaze. Then, when he had quailed, she answered, slowly:

"Mr. Luxmore, I know not how far your powers as legal guardian may permit you to go, nor how remorselessly you may use them, nor how much beyond their rightful limit you may

stretch them. But this I do know," she said, and her slight form arose and dilated, and her eyes blazed, "that neither man on earth, nor demon in Hades, has power to compel me to become your wife. And why? Because sooner would I give my body to be burned."

"Very well, minion. You who despise my love shall feel my power."

"Mr. Luxmore, I almost pity you, that you should be so weak as to suppose that you can intimidate me," replied the brave girl, calmly, rising to leave the room.

But quick as lightning Julius Luxmore intercepted and passed her, went out and turned the key upon his prisoner.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

In the meanwhile Willful Brande walked up and down the front piazza, musing upon the strange situation of the beautiful and friendless maiden.

The more he reflected upon the character and position of her guardian, the more strongly he became convinced of the imminent necessity of her being immediately delivered from his power.

That Julius Luxmore would not scruple to make use of any means for the accomplishment of his purposes he felt assured.

The question with which his mind laboured was, how to effect her escape.

While intensely studying this problem his eye fell upon old Timon sauntering alone through the grove.

In the time that he had spent on the Island, he had especially noticed the great devotion of this aged servant to his fair young mistress. He walked rapidly down the steps, across the lawn, and into the grove, where the old man lingered.

After a preliminary conversation it was arranged between them that a boat should be in readiness at Crystal Creek by two o'clock in the morning, to assist the escape of Miss L'Orient, and that old Moll should contrive to give her a note apprising her to be in readiness at that hour.

Willful Brande then withdrew to his solitary chamber to pass the anxious intervening time. The hours crept by with leaden feet till at length the clock struck the welcome hour of two.

He took his hat, stole softly to the door and pushed.

The door was fast locked!

He was a prisoner.

For a moment the discovery of this fact, with all the consequences to be deduced from it, almost paralysed his energies.

But the next instant he had recovered his presence of mind and activity of resources. He suddenly recollected a chisel that had lain for some days upon his mantelshelf.

It was but the work of a few minutes to take that instrument, and with it force back the catch of the lock and free himself.

He then hurried softly through the dark and silent hall and down the stairs.

All below was mute and black as death and Erebus.

Cautiously unfastening the hall door, he paced slowly around the house until he found himself below the window of Etoile's boudoir. Against the wall leaned a ladder.

"So far—well. Timon has been punctual in placing this means of escape at hand," he thought. And ascending a few of the rungs he called, in a soft tone:

"Miss L'Orient! Miss L'Orient," and listened. But no voice replied.

He went up further and called out louder; but without success.

Growing very anxious, he ascended to the top of the ladder, put his head in at the window, and called eagerly:

"Miss L'Orient! Miss L'Orient!"

But all was dark, and cold, and still.

"This is no time for false delicacy. She must forgive me, since I mean well," said Willful, very much alarmed, as he turned himself in at the window, and groped his way through the

boudoir, and through the adjoining chamber, still calling on the name of Etoile.

But neither sound nor motion answered him; all was dark and silent as death and the grave.

Etoile was gone!

Half frantic with terror, upon her account, Willful Brande hurried through the window and down the ladder, and ran with phrensied haste straight on to the cabin of Timon, at the door of which he knocked, imperatively, exclaiming:

"Timon! Timon! are you there? What is the meaning of this?"

"Lor, gor a-mity, Marse Willful, honey, come in, yerself. I can't move. I done tied hand and foot," answered the voice of the old man.

Willful pushed the door open and entered the cabin, which was as dark as any other place in that dark night.

"Feel on to de shelf dere for de match and de candle, honey, and light it, and I done tell you all about it," said Timon's voice, from the obscurity.

Willful found a match, and struck a light, that revealed to him the form of poor old Timon, bound hand and foot with strong cords, and thrown upon the floor of his cabin. Without an instant's delay he seized a sharp knife, cut the cords, and helped the old man to his feet.

"Now then, what is the meaning of all this?" inquired Willful.

"Couldn't tell you, to save my life, marster, only I reckon how Marse Julius done found wedom out, and outwitted us. 'Cause 'bout an hour ago, he done came here and throw me down, and tie me, and leave me here without sayin' of a word."

A terrible idea occurred to Willful.

"Come! follow me quickly! to the boat!" he said, and rushed forth into the night.

The old man hurried after as fast as age and infirmity would permit.

They reached Crystal Creek just in time, dimly to discern that a boat had left the shore, and was now some quarter of a mile out upon the bay.

"He has carried her off. He would not have done it by force, since that must have created a disturbance which would have reached my ears. He has carried her off by fraud. He will take her on board his chartered ship. Quick! prepare a boat, and let us row for life. I will follow her thither. I will board that ship. I will rescue her or die!" exclaimed Willful, vehemently.

"It will be die, then, marster; but nobody shan't call old Timon a coward in his old days," said the poor creature, who, with the air of a martyr, went to prepare the boat.

But Willful would not let the old man risk his safety by accompanying him. Alone he entered the light skiff, and using both oars, propelled it swiftly over the water.

He could no longer see the other boat, but he rowed directly for the distant ship, seen by the light at her prow, and which he naturally supposed to be the chartered vessel of Julius Luxmore.

His light skiff flew like a sea-bird over the surface of the bay, and quickly touched the side of the vessel.

Without a moment's hesitation he scaled the ladder, and stood upon the deck, face to face with his sister, Barbara Brande, whose barque had anchored there an hour before.

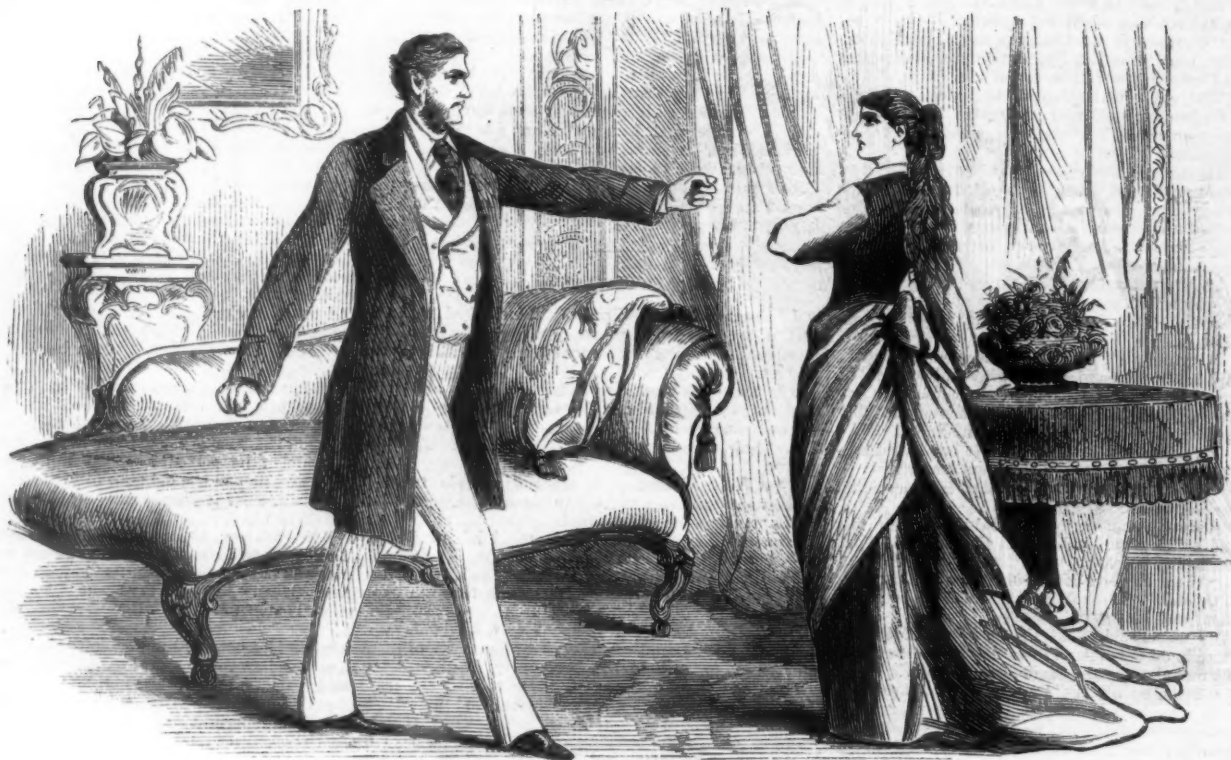
"Willful!"

"Barbara!"

They gazed upon each other in amazement for a moment, and then rushed together in a hearty embrace.

Their hurried explanations were at this juncture interrupted by a loud shriek, and following the sound they saw the form of a girl leap out of a small boat rowed by one man.

With instinctive recognition the young man plunged into the sea and struck out gallantly for the sinking girl, whose form he seized and bore victoriously to the starboard gangway ladder, and up upon the deck of the "Ocean Queen," for this was the ship of Barbara Brande, which had just an hour before dropped anchor here.



[THROWING OFF THE MASK.]

Etoile, half suffocated and half exhausted, gave vent to a convulsive sob, recovered her breath, looked up to thank her brave preserver, and recognised Willful Brande.

"Oh, may Heaven repay you; but how should you be here?" she exclaimed, in a deeply agitated voice.

"I will inform you presently, young lady; now let me present you to my sister," he replied, as Barbara Brande advanced from the stern sheets.

Barbara took her charge down into the cabin, relieved her of her dripping clothes, and then entered Estelle's cabin, and sat down beside the berth where the lady reclined.

"We are near the Island," said Barbara. "You may see your daughter Etoile within an hour."

Estelle's countenance beamed with joy. "Oh, is it possible? Am I awake and in my senses? shall I see Etoile?"

"In less than half-an-hour. Compose yourself and hear," said Barbara, who then commenced and related all the circumstances of the storm; the shipwreck, the saving of Willful; the subsequent éclaircissement between Etoile and himself in respect to her guardian; the arrival of Luxmore; the attempted flight of Etoile; the treachery to which she was subjected; her abduction by Julius Luxmore; her desperate escape and effort to swim to the ship; and her rescue by Willful Brande. She concluded by saying:

"And now, as I deemed it necessary that she should rest before having another subject of excitement, I refrained from speaking of her mother, and left her to repose."

Half an hour after Barbara entered the state-room Etoile was lying wide awake, her rosy lips half parted, her violet eyes half veiled in a dreamy smile.

"How do you feel, my dear?" inquired Barbara.

"Ah! Miss Brande, I have had such a sweet dream! so seeming real, that I can scarcely dispel the illusion! I was dreaming of my mother;

I thought that she was living, and that she had found me."

"Suppose it was no dream, dear girl?" said Barbara, in an agitated voice.

Etoile's eyes flared wide open, and her colour went and came.

"What if your mother had met with Madeline in New York, had heard of your existence and residence, and had embarked on this very vessel to seek you at the Island?"

"Oh, it is! it is so!" cried Etoile, shaken, as a rose-tree is shaken by a storm—"where, where, Miss Brande, where is she now?"

"Here, my beloved child! here, my long-lost darling, here!" cried the voice of the lady, as she opened the door and entered.

Etoile sprang up in a sitting position, and threw herself toward the lady, who opened her arms to receive her, and murmuring—"Mother"—fell fainting on her bosom. No possible care could have prepared Etoile for a meeting like this! It must necessarily have overwhelmed her.

"Joy never kills—be not uneasy," said Barbara, as she lifted the fainting girl from the bosom of Estelle, and replaced her on the berth. And indeed their united efforts soon recalled the absent senses of their charge. Then Barbara, with her eyes full of tears, withdrew and left the mother and child together.

At eleven a. m. the 'Ocean Queen' cast anchor off the Headland. The long-boat was lowered, and the mother and daughter, with Barbara and her two brothers, entered it and were rowed across to the beach.

"Lady," said Barbara, "you have fine nerves, and the great self-control that they give—exert them now."

Barbara closed the door, took her hand, and led her a little way back into the chamber.

Presently Estelle started up, exclaiming:

"Montressor! Montressor!—If ever I heard Montressor's voice, I heard it just now! Oh, it was so low, yet I heard it!"

"Yes, you heard it. Compose yourself, dear lady. Summon your great strength, and go in!

Leave Miss L'Orient here with me a moment;" and she opened the door.

Estelle passed through, and entered the shadowy parlour—the tumult of her mind causing the scene to swim before her—so that at first she could not distinguish persons.

But an aged form tottered toward her, and fell upon her neck, saying:

"Oh, Estelle, my child! my child! can you pardon your old father?"

She sank at his feet, and kissed his hands, and said:

"Forgive and bless me, my father."

Estelle sank upon the sofa—the beating of her heart was almost audible.

A moment passed and Eagletower was in the room at her side.

What was first said on either side they could not have told!—how should another? It was a most agitated, exciting interview, in which all that either learned at first was, that neither heart was changed toward the other. Lord Eagletower learned the meaning of the sacrifice that she had made. And she discovered the supererogatory nature of her long self-immolation.

And finally he said:

"My Estelle! my love! my wife! deemed you that ever I could forget you and marry? I! Oh, my own! all these years of absence have you only taken root deeper and deeper into my heart! become more and more knitted to my soul! My wife! my innermost self, not now, not to-day only, but always and for ever, from eternity to eternity, my own!"

Years have flown. Lord and Lady Eagletower reside in great splendour, surrounded by their interesting family, at the Eastern Court, where he is resident minister. The fate of Luxmore is unknown.

Barbara Brande still sails upon the sea, and promises to leave it only when her brother Willful, who is now a commander in the navy, shall be united to his promised bride—Etoile L'Orient, the lovely Lady of the Isle.

[THE END.]



[CONSTANCE CASTS HER NET.]

POOR LOO.

By the Author of "Dan's Treasure," "Clylie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl," etc.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LOO DREAMS A DREAM.

"Alas! how easily things go wrong!
A sigh too deep or a kiss too long,
And there comes a mist and a blinding rain,
And life is never the same again." MACDONALD.

"Mr darling," and warm lips were pressed on the cold, motionless ones of the insensible girl as though their very intensity would woo her back to consciousness and life.

The two were quite alone, the cold air fanned Loo's brow, for her hat had been thrown aside and Robert Marker had carried her a few steps to the side of a clear bright stream of water, that like a silver thread made its way down from the top of the hill to feed a brook which in its turn rolled on to the river.

Some cold water dashed into her face perhaps helped to revive her more than the warm kisses, but the consciousness of them must have been present to her mind when she opened her eyes and saw who was bending so tenderly over her.

For one mad blissful moment the belief of perfect love given and reciprocated flashed upon Loo's mind, to be banished again as quickly as it came, for Count Schobeloff's words still rang in her ears. "You do give yourself where you are not wanted; you do love the man that does love your aunt," and she felt that it was true.

She did love him; useless to hide this fact from herself any longer; all that remained now for her to do was to scrupulously hide it.

With these thoughts in her mind she instinctively shrank from him, a motion that brought him back to his senses and made him think he was taking an unfair advantage of the child,

and, anxious as he had ever been for her welfare, he put a curb upon himself and smiling as naturally and kindly as he could, he said:

"Do you know you fainted just now, my child? What has frightened you so?"

"Herbert and the Count," she replied, passing her hand over her forehead; "they are fighting, do you think they will hurt each other?"

"Not very probable, but if you wish I will go and see."

"Oh no, don't leave me, I am frightened of both of them. If we could only find Mabel and Mrs. Talboys, or I could get back to the hotel. Ah, here is Jack," with a sigh of relief, then in an undertone, "Don't say anything about my fright or fainting."

"Here you are, Miss Loo," exclaimed young Talboys, a flush of pleasure suffusing his face. "Your aunt sent me to look for you. Why what is the matter," he added, with concern, "your face is all wet, and you are looking quite ill?"

"Oh, she has only been trying to faint," replied Marker, lightly. "Where are the two ladies?"

"They have returned to the hotel," was the reply, in the doubtful tone of one not satisfied with the explanation given him.

"Just where we are going; will you accompany us? Loo, you can take an arm of each if you don't feel equal to walking alone."

"No, I am quite recovered now, thank you," was the languid reply.

And thus the three walked on, but they had not proceeded far before the girl began to flag, and Robert Marker insisted upon her taking his arm.

But even in this way they did not get on very fast, and it was with a sense of relief to all of them when an empty carriage came up which they could hire and thus more comfortably make their way back to the hotel.

"You had better go and lie down for an hour," Robert Marker observed as they entered the building, and Loo, saying she would do so, ascended to her own room, and dressed as she was, threw herself upon the bed.

There she lay until Mabel Travers came to her and plied her with questions, to all of which she obtained but an unsatisfactory reply.

Yesterday the girl would have opened her heart to her friend and protectress, to-day it was as a closed book; the poison of asps has been instilled in her soul; from henceforth Loo has a secret to guard.

One, poor child, that the observant eyes of the woman who had loved her had read and knew of, but she could not know that she herself seemed the greatest obstacle to the girl's happiness, and that sooner than stand in the way of her benefactress, or rival her in the affections of the man she believed they both loved, Loo would have gone away homeless and friendless as when she was picked up in the streets eleven years ago, even though by so doing her life should be the penalty.

No, poor Loo was no serpent on the hearth, and the hand that cherished would never be stung by her.

Thanks to Mabel Travers' careful teaching she knew it was more noble to endure a wrong than to inflict it, and hard and bitter as the lesson was for the child she felt her spirit rise within her, "to suffer and be strong" and she thought of those spoken of in the Apocalypse of whom the angel said, "These are they who have passed through deep tribulation," and she prayed humbly and fervently that she might be deemed worthy to be numbered among them.

Thus in her youth and beauty Loo lay upon her bed, suffering as only the young can suffer while the feelings of the heart are untried and unblunted, and the utter hollowness of all things human and earthly, though heard and recognised in theory, have never pressed themselves with deadening power upon the soul.

And as Loo thus struggled with her tearless agony things became dimmer and vaguer and more far off, until memory left her and she slept.

As she thus slept she dreamed a dream, so

vivid, real and lifelike that the memory of it clung to her for years afterwards with the distinctness which attaches itself to some stirring event in our lives in which we have played an important part, and that has exerted a certain influence for good or evil throughout the rest of our existence.

In her vision the girl saw herself walking along a sandy beach, the moonlight shining on the restless waves while the sea looked as though a storm had raged the day before, and the waters could not rest or subside so soon after the evil winds had troubled them.

And as she walked along, quite alone as it seemed, a shadowy figure hovering in the distance always kept her in sight, and she seemed to know, though she did not distinctly see, that this was the lady of her dreams.

A woman, so like herself, and yet older and fairer, and as it seemed to her own mind, not recognising her own charms, so far more beautiful; and the lady appeared to know she was in danger, yet not to have the power to warn her, and so the two—with a great distance between them—a gulf which seemed impassable to either, but still more so to the lady than herself—walked along by the groaning sea, for miles and miles, until Loo saw that her own feet were weary, and she sat down on a low rock to rest.

The time she rested here seemed short, yet darkness came on, a black cloud hid the moon from her eyes, the sea grew angry in its roar, and she felt frightened, and would have hurried away from the spot, but she could not.

But, as she thus sat here spell-bound as it were, and she knew that her dream lady was imploring and urging her to come away, a man who seemed as though he had sprung from the earth or the sea stood before her, and with strange words, the meaning of which she but faintly comprehended, tried to persuade, and then to force her to rise and come with him in a boat, which, the cloud having passed by, the moonlight now enabled her to see.

It was in vain that he pleaded with her, and at last began to threaten.

She would not move. Indeed she could not, she seemed to have been turned to stone like the rock on which she sat, to have indeed become part of it.

And, while the man became more violent and urgent, her dream lady came nearer and nearer, until both of them seemed to beat her side, each with a hand on her shoulder, each trying to drag her in a different direction, and though she preferred to go with the lady she felt the man's power was the greatest, and resist as she would and might, he was dragging her slowly but surely towards the sea, and she seemed to hear herself repeat those lines from Hamlet:

"I will go; what should I fear? I do not hold my life at a pin's fee; and for my soul what can it do to that, being a thing immortal?"

But while she spoke the dream lady answered:

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body."

And as her dream lady spoke a strange and brilliant light came upon the scene, and she saw the man and recognised him, and she sank from him with horror and loathing, for it was the terror of her childhood—Herbert Dorset.

"Mother, save me!" she cried in agony, and started up in bed.

The dream was gone; the moonlight shone with her ghostly guardian and would be destroyer had passed away, but Mabel Travers and Robert Marker were standing by her bed side anxiously watching her.

"You are not well, my darling," said the lady, caressingly. "What is the matter with you?"

"Take me away, auntie! take me away!" moaned the girl, resting her head on the elder woman's shoulder. "Oh, take me away from Herbert, take me away."

"I will," replied Mabel, soothingly, "but don't get excited; we will start to-morrow morning; now you shall undress properly and go to bed."

"Would you like me to return to England with you?" asked Robert Marker, with some hesitation.

But Mabel replied:

"No thank you, there is no necessity, we are quite capable of taking care of ourselves."

While Loo breathed never a word; henceforth she felt he no longer belonged to her as in days that were past, and never would again, until he was the husband of Mabel Travers.

Thus it was the next morning, without saying adieu to any but the Talboys, Mabel and Loo started for England, the latter little dreaming that she was hastening to the fulfilment of her dreadful dream.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LEFT BEHIND.

"Learn to win a lady's faith;
Nobly as the thing is high;
Bravely as for life and death
With a loyal gravity;
Lead her from the festive boards;
Point her to the starry skies,
Guard her by your truthful words,
Pure from courtship's flatteries."

MRS. BROWNING.

A CHILL, a sense of incompleteness, a want of something had come over the friends whom Loo and Miss Travers had left behind them.

Herbert Dorset encountered young Talboys the same morning the two ladies had started, and before he himself had heard the news, and, noticing the dejected expression of poor Jack's countenance and general appearance, smiled cynically and muttered to himself:

"He is scorched, poor moth; as if it were possible she could look at him!"

But he simply bowed to Jack.

There was no love lost between the two young men, and they mutually distrusted each other.

So Jack went on his way for a long, solitary walk, nursing his boyish passion, dreaming of Loo's beauty and perfections of mind and body, wondering what could have made Miss Travers start with her so suddenly for England, and regretting that he had not summoned up sufficient resolution to speak upon the subject nearest his heart before they went away.

And Herbert, with something of the feelings of a conqueror, walked towards the Hotel de Flanders, while a certain jauntiness in his air and manner made more than one person turn and look at the young man, and think how well the world went with him.

He had called the night before to inquire how Loo was after her fright.

Had been received by Mabel—who listened to his account of the affair—thanked for his timely assistance, and told that the poor child was so overcome by fatigue and fright that she was now sleeping, and could not be disturbed. But no hint of any intention to go away had been uttered.

Indeed, up to that time no idea of the kind had occurred to Mabel herself.

Thus he walked into the hotel quite unprepared for the blow that was awaiting him.

"Miss Travers gone away?" he repeated, as a waiter in very good English had just informed him of the fact.

"Yes, sir; the two ladies went away by the seven o'clock train this morning."

"Colonel Talboys and family have not gone with them?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"And Mr. Marker is still here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Take my card up to the Colonel."

The man obeyed, and a few seconds after the young man found himself in the presence of the soldier and his wife.

"You have come to look after the runaways?" said the lady, her own eyes red with the suspicion of weeping.

"Yes, I cannot understand or believe that they are gone," he replied.

"Nor can I," assented Mrs. Talboys. "I was never more astonished in my life than to find when I came down to breakfast this morn-
Mabel Travers, and that she and Loo had

gone without, beyond this, saying good-bye. It is too bad of them; I never felt more hurt in all my life. Poor Jack couldn't eat any breakfast, and I feel as though I could never love or believe in anyone again."

"But what could be the cause of their sudden determination? Did they go alone?" he asked.

"Yes, they went alone. Mr. Marker saw them off, one of the waiter's told me, but he did not go with them. I have seen him since, though not near enough to speak to, and as for the cause, you see Mabel says nothing but that it is urgent private business. Yet she received neither letter nor telegram after she went to bed, and she was gone before we were up in the morning."

And she handed a note to the young man, who read it.

It threw no light upon the mystery, but ran as follows:

"MY DEAR MRS. TALBOYS,—Urgent private affairs require that Loo and I should return to England at once. Please say adieu to all friends for us. We shall meet again soon, I hope. With kind regards to your husband and son and yourself, in which Loo joins me,

"Believe me, yours sincerely,

"MABEL TRAVERS."

That was all.

Herbert read the letter over twice, then returned it with a forced laugh as he observed:

"A woman's whim, I suppose. However, we shall meet again soon. I am thinking of returning to England in a week or two."

Then he took his leave, hugging the grim satisfaction to his heart that if Loo and Mabel had gone away thus abruptly they had at least gone alone, and all his would-be rivals for the present were like himself, left behind.

But what of Count Schobelloff?

As the idea occurred to him he walked back a few steps to inquire if the Count was still at the hotel.

"Yes," was the reply, "but he is in bed and a doctor has been sent for, his lordship having met with an accident."

At which, as might be expected, Herbert smiled grimly, the accident in question, a couple of black eyes and swollen nose, having been caused by the somewhat forcible application of his own fists.

"Well?" asked Constance, with an unpleasant smile, that was almost a sneer, when her brother returned. "How is the charming Lucile? That is the fancy name you have all given her, isn't it?"

"I wish you would not speak in that way, Constance," replied her brother with considerable irritation; "it almost makes me hate you. Suppose you loved a man, and I never heard his name mentioned without sneering at him. Would you love me any better for it?"

"I suppose not," wearily. "I will try not to do it again, but you have not answered my question. How is Loo?"

"Why do you ask?" he inquired, suspiciously.

"You have never done so before."

"Is it too late to begin? You seem strangely irritable this morning, Herbert."

"Perhaps I am; I have enough to make me so. Loo and Mabel have gone away, leaving a note of adieu to the Talboys, and without saying good-bye to anybody. It is such odd behaviour on their part."

"Very," assented his sister, but something in her tone made her brother look at her suspiciously and ask:

"Do you know anything—that you look and speak so strangely?"

"No; what should I know? I saw Loo in a man's arms yesterday, fainting or something of the kind, that was why I asked after her health this morning."

And she turned away, and would have left the room but that her brother detained her.

"Who was the man?" he asked, and his face darkened.

"I shall not tell you," was the reply.

"Then I insist upon knowing."

The tone and words of command roused Constance Dorset.

Whatever her faults or failings were fear was not one of them.

Very calmly, but with the calmness of concentrated passion, she turned upon her brother and said:

"Herbert, you should know me well enough to believe that when I say 'I will do anything,' I mean it, and nothing on earth or in Heaven—if there is such a place—can deter me; and if I say 'I will not,' the rack and stake could not coerce me. And when I tell you now I shall not reply to your question you may be sure that I mean it."

With which she swept out of the room, her brother making no further attempt to detain her.

"Obstinate wretch," he muttered, between his teeth. "What a thing it is to have such a sister."

But he was not to be thwarted because Constance was obstinate.

Strolling out some hour or two later enjoying a cigar, he came across Robert Marker similarly engaged, and though there had been but little cordiality between the two men hitherto, Herbert attached himself to him now, asking frankly enough if he knew the cause of Miss Travers going away so suddenly.

"Well, I can't say that I do," replied the surgeon, carelessly. "Loo had a faint of some kind yesterday, I was told, and Miss Travers had occasion to hasten back to England. That Russian, I believe, made himself very obnoxious. But for mixing the young lady's name up in the matter, and making it a topic for scandal, I should certainly make a point of giving the fellow a thrashing."

"I did so yesterday, and have been expecting a challenge all the morning," asserted Herbert. "If it comes I shall ask you to be my second, but, as you say, I should like to keep Loo's name out of the affair. She is such a child, and I am sure never flirted with him. I have heard her say how much she disliked him. I wish you would come and dine with us to-day, Marker. It would be quite a charity; my sister and I are so much alone. I'll invite General Speke also if you will, and we can have a quiet rubber after dinner."

"With pleasure."

Thus the invitation was given and accepted, and Herbert went back to his sister to inform her of the promised arrival of his guests.

"And we will dine in our room," he observed. "I hate those table d'hôtes."

"Yes, it will be much preferable," assented Constance, with a smile. "I am glad they are coming."

And then, as soon as she could, she left her brother and went off to her room, where she locked herself in and tried to realise the chance which fortune or accident had thus thrown in her way, of fascinating the man whom she had reluctantly admitted she loved, without, too, the presence of her rival.

If ever she was to succeed in winning his love this was her time and opportunity, and repugnant as it was to her natural feelings, her pride, arrogance, and the course of life she had previously marked out for herself, the passion that had entered her heart put them all aside, and bent her iron resolution as the lightning rolls up, smites, or crumbles the most strongly-built edifices.

Indeed, when Constance Dorset told her brother that she should never marry she meant truly exactly what she said.

Little as her conscience had troubled her about poor little Freddy's death, she felt that it had separated her from the ordinary ties of life, and that for her the protecting love of husband and the clinging arms of children were never to be the portion.

To all this she had with the long reasoning of years reconciled herself.

Had steeled her heart against love, sympathy, or friendship of any kind except towards her brother Herbert, and to him it was rather a theory than a fact.

She had seen so little of him since that terrible event, and though he had written pretty regularly from India, the world had changed during

the last eight years for both of them, and both were mutually disappointed, though they tried to hide it, when they met.

And thus it was that being, as it were, by circumstances prepared for the tyrant that "of every woman's heart will have the whole and not a part," Robert Marker's appearance had acted as a torch to the combustible materials ready to be ignited, and unconsciously enough on his part, he had become to this misguided woman a power even greater than had been her hatred to her step-mother.

On his part, Robert Marker rather admired poor little Freddy Dorset's step-sister.

Love he had no thought of—with regard to her, at any rate—but, like most of the world, he believed her quite guiltless of the child's death, thought it simply impossible that she could have committed the murder, and he pitied her greatly for having ever been suspected of it.

Thus his manner, always courteous and deferential to women, had a certain amount of subtle sympathy and unexpressed tenderness in it towards Constance, which, though unintentional on his part, and only what he would have shown towards a sister unjustly suspected, as he believed her to have been, was quite enough to delude a woman just ready for self-delusion as Constance was at this time.

Despite all this, however, she intuitively felt that Loo and Mabel Travers had some hold or influence upon him such as she had not, and such as she possibly might never attain, and now those obstacles had suddenly departed and left the field open to her.

Even the sight which had met her eyes through the trees the day before failed to disturb her equanimity now.

Loo had no doubt been frightened, and Robert Marker having found her as a child, and been the cause of Mabel taking charge of and adopting her, was no doubt fond of the girl.

While, so far had the bitterness gone from her in the anticipation of triumph, that she could now admit that Loo was a sweet girl when she first knew her, had grown up into an interesting girl, and it was not to be wondered at if Robert Marker entertained a paternal or brotherly love for her.

So far she got, then, notwithstanding her contempt for the frivolity and fripperies of her sex, she dressed herself with particular taste and care.

Of course she was above the aids of art and fashion, as some strong-minded ladies profess to be, or rather, I should more correctly say, she had been, for the unpleasant conclusion had forced itself upon her mind that though the theory of "beauty unadorned, adorned the most" was all very well when retained as a theory, it did not answer quite so well in practice.

Robert Marker, like most other men, admired a pretty dress next to a pretty face, and thought the latter all the prettier and more interesting for being accompanied by the former.

A conclusion which Constance had so far acted upon as to provide herself with a dress, if occasion should arise, to wear it.

The occasion has come now.

She has the field all to herself—can so far control opportunity as to make it minister to the accomplishment of her desires.

With such means at their command many women could afford to defy failure, and no man upon whom they had set their minds would be safe lest he took to ignominious flight.

And Robert Marker was not going to run away, that was quite certain, therefore the course was open and clear before her, and the question is:

Will she succeed?

Will the murderess of little Freddy Dorset become the wife of the man for whom Poor Loo would at any time be ready to lay down her life.

A dark curtain hides the future from our eyes.

(To be Continued)

THE Astronomer's Royal deduction from the transit of Venus is that the distance of the sun from the earth is 93,300,000 miles.

GLORIA;

OR,

MARRIED IN RAGE.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GLORIA waited anxiously for an answer to her second letter to David Lindsay; but none came. She let another week elapse and then wrote a third letter.

"For I will not give him up so easily. It is quite possible that even two letters may have miscarried in these irregular country mails," she said, as she carefully directed the envelope, and went out and posted it with her own hand.

This was on the last day of February.

On her return from the post-office she found Miss De Crespigny standing in the middle of their private parlour floor, attended by the two maids, and surrounded by several open travelling-trunks.

"Oh, Aunt Agrippina, whatever are you doing?" inquired Gloria, uneasily.

"Packing up, my dear, to go home. I have had the trunks all brought in here for room—there is not room to step around them in the bed chamber. Nerissa! take the black velvet dress back and lay it out on the bed to fold it. What do you mean by dragging it in here in that manner?" demanded Miss De Crespigny, turning to rebuke her maid.

"Oh, dear Aunt Agrippina, I hope you are really not going away to-morrow?" exclaimed Gloria, throwing herself down into one of the easy-chairs.

"Indeed I am! I would not travel with the crowd that will leave the city after the fourth, for any consideration."

"Then what shall I do?" exclaimed Gloria.

"I hope you will have sense enough to accompany me."

"I cannot, Aunt Agrippina. I must wait here until all hope of getting a letter from David Lindsay fails."

"And pray how long will that be?"

"I will wait a week or ten days longer, and then—"

"You will be obliging enough to accompany me home if I choose to wait so long for you," sneered the provoked old lady. "It is that you mean?"

"No, Aunt Agrippina, that is not what I mean. I shall not go home with you even then," quietly replied Gloria.

"Eh!" exclaimed Miss De Crespigny.

"I say I shall not return home with you, even if I fail to get a letter."

"Then what on earth will you do?"

"I really thought I had told you more than a week ago—I shall go down to St. Inigoes to see Father Moriarty and inquire for David Lindsay. He may be ill, you know, and unable to read or to answer my letters."

"Why cannot you write to Father Moriarty, if you are determined to be an idiot?"

"Because I do not wish to bring in any third party, unless it should be absolutely necessary. I will wait a week in the forlorn hope of getting an answer to my letter. If I should not get one, I feel that I can wait no longer. I must go down—well, if you want the exact programme of my campaign," said the girl, with a slight smile, "I shall go first to Sandy Isle to look for David Lindsay in his own old home. If I do not find him there, I will go to St. Inigoes and seek news of him from Father Moriarty, who will certainly be able to give it to me."

Miss De Crespigny dropped a box of jewellery that she held in her hand, and sank down in the nearest easy-chair.

For a moment she seemed unable to speak, but then she burst forth with:

"Gloria De la Vera, are you stark, staring mad? Is this the result of twelve months' close intimacy with me and association with the most refined and cultivated society in the world?"

"Yes, Aunt Agrippina, it is!" answered Gloria, emphatically.

"Nerisse and Celine, leave the room!" sternly commanded the old lady, suddenly realising that two pairs of gaping eyes and ears were wide open to see and hear all that was said and done.

The two maids silently obeyed their mistress, closing the bedroom door behind them, and, of course, taking turn to listen at the key-hole.

"Now, Gloria De la Vera, after all the accomplished women and polished men that it has been your privilege to meet in society, you can even remember without humiliation your relations with that young fisherman?"

"He is my husband!" exclaimed Gloria, flushing up to her temples—"and oh! how much too worthy for me! The more I have seen of refined and cultivated people, and accomplished and polished people, the more from contrast have I reason to love and honour my rugged, noble David Lindsay! Why, Aunt Agrippina, the very best thing in me—perhaps the only really good thing in me—is my capacity for loving and honouring David Lindsay!" said Gloria, warmly.

"You are mad! As mad as a March hare! I swear I am tempted to apply for a writ of lunatico inquiring in your case and have you shut up in a madhouse!" said Miss De Crespiigny, quite seriously.

"Don't you yield to that temptation, Aunt Agrippina, because it would bring you to grief and loss. I should certainly tell the doctors and magistrates that I have a husband who should be taken into their counsels, and I should refer them to the Parish Register of St. Matthew's Church for the truth of my words," replied Gloria quite as seriously.

"And do you really mean to tell me, then, that you are going down to Sandy Isle, running after that young fisherman?"

"Yes, Aunt Agrippina, I really mean to tell you that. If I do not get a letter within a week I mean to go down to Sandy Isle to seek my husband in his own home."

"Then you will degrade yourself in his eyes, and he will justly despise you."

"Not so, Aunt Agrippina. He is my husband; you cannot deny that; and he knows my heart and mind better than any other person ever did or ever could. I could never fear that David Lindsay would misunderstand me."

"You are lost! lost! lost! All I have done for you has been done in vain! And now, infatuated girl, I tell you what I never intended to tell you! You think him so good and noble!"

"I know him so good and noble! So much nobler and better than anyone else I ever met with in the world, though I have met with many honourable and estimable persons."

"You think all that of David Lindsay?"

"I tell you I know all that about him."

"Now let me tell you that you know nothing at all about him. You do not even know his name, which is not Lindsay at all."

"Not Lindsay!" exclaimed Gloria, starting.

"No, his name is not Lindsay," repeated Miss Agrippina.

"But I know it is. I know his grandmother. I have known them both ever since I was a child. Whatever could have put it into your head that his name was anything else?"

"Facts, my dear; well established facts, that you can fully authenticate by writing to Father Moriarty."

"Then I have been deceived, but not by David Lindsay. If I did not know his real name, why, neither could he have known it when we were in company, for he would have told me. But what then is his real name, Miss De Crespiigny?"

"His name is Gryphyn."

"Gryphyn!" echoed Gloria, turning pale.

"Yes, Gryphyn! He has the blood of a murderer in his veins, and the spirit of Satan in his heart."

"Oh, no! no! no! no! no!" wailed Gloria, covering her face with her hands; "my own good, true, noble David Lindsay, he has no such evil in him."

"He is the son of that monster, Dyvyd Gryphyn, who capped the climax of his atrocious life by turning his young and inoffensive wife out of doors on a bitter winter's night to perish in the snowstorm on the mountain."

Gloria's horror escaped in a half suppressed shriek, and again she buried her face in her hands.

"But the woman did not perish, it seems, for she was first sheltered by a poor woman, then escaped from the neighbourhood, and finally reached the distant home of her foster-mother, Mrs. Lindsay, of Sandy Isle, where she lived long enough to bring her son David into the world and then died, leaving the boy to be reared as the son of James and Kate Lindsay, and the grandson of the Widow Lindsay."

"Oh, Miss De Crespiigny, are you sure this story you have told me is the truth?" moaned Gloria.

"Yes, perfectly sure of the truth, or I should not have told you."

"Oh, Miss De Crespiigny, David Lindsay could never have known of this when we were together!"

"No, no one knew of it except Dame Lindsay and Father Moriarty at that time."

"How long have you known this?"

"Something less than a year."

"And oh, Miss De Crespiigny, how did you find it out?"

"Very unexpectedly, Gloria, and I would rather not tell you how I made the discovery," replied Miss De Crespiigny, evasively and mysteriously, for she was resolved not to tell Gloria that David Lindsay had written to her an account of the unexpected reappearance and death of Dyvyd Gryphyn, together with his death-bed acknowledgment of David Lindsay as his lawful son and heir, for she had determined that Gloria should never see or hear of that letter, lest her persevering inquiries should lead to the discovery of the young man's noble renunciation, and confirm her not only in her high estimate of his character, but in her resolution to re-unite herself to him.

"And you will not tell me how you found this out, Aunt Agrippina?"

"I would rather not at present. Some time I may do so."

"Well, after all, it does not matter how you found it out, since it is true! And then—oh, I am so glad of that! I never thought of it until this instant!" she suddenly exclaimed, as her face lighted up.

"Of what are you so glad, Gloria?"

"That David Lindsay is the real heir and owner of Gryphynhold! And everybody says there is unlimited wealth in the iron mines on that estate."

"And are you glad that he has or may have that wealth in conjunction with the murderer's blood and Satan's spirit?" sternly demanded the old lady.

"David Lindsay is good, true, and noble in himself, no matter how evil his ancestors were."

"Yes, on the surface. But how do you know what may be latent in Dyvyd Gryphyn's son?"

"I do not know; but if my dear, self-sacrificing David Lindsay has inherited an evil nature, it is all the more noble in him that he has so successfully combated it as to have utterly conquered it and turned it out of himself; for a more magnanimous soul than his I have never met."

"But still, you will not now dare to unite your destiny with that of a Gryphyn?"

"Indeed yes! If David Lindsay has the least remains of the Gryphyn nature in him, he will all the more need the one woman whom he purely loves to aid him in combating them. Yes, Aunt Agrippina, my resolution is unshaken. I will reunite myself with my husband."

Miss De Crespiigny groaned.

"And now my only hope is that the young man himself, who, when I saw him last, did show some signs of good sense and feeling, may not be tempted to take advantage of your lunacy, for it is lunacy, Gloria."

With these words the old lady arose and shut down the lids of the half-packed travelling trunks, and then went to the door of the bed-chamber and opened it so deliberately that the two eavesdroppers had time enough to scuttle away and pretend to be very busy in folding dresses to pack up.

"Nerisse! Celine! You may put those things

all back in the wardrobe and bureau, and drag these trunks out of the parlour. I shall pack no more to-day," the old lady called out from her station in the communicating door.

"Oh, then, dear Aunt Agrippina, you will not go and leave me to-morrow?" gratefully exclaimed Gloria.

"Of course I shall not leave you to your own devices, you aggravating creature! I shall stay with you until I see you through this affair, one way or the other," exclaimed Miss De Crespiigny, indignantly.

But that did not prevent the young girl from catching her around the neck and kissing her heartily.

Another week passed away.

Parliament had adjourned, and nearly all strangers had left Liverpool.

No letter had come from David Lindsay.

"Well, how much longer are we to wait?" impatiently demanded Miss De Crespiigny.

"Not a day longer than that on which the next steamer sails, for both pass La Compté's Landing, where we are to get off, for, of course, if you mean to see me 'through this affair,' as you promised, you will go down to Sandy Isle with me?"

"Oh, yes, of course! One idiot makes many, and I shall go all the more willingly that I promised my sister-in-law, in behalf of the absent master, to go down to Promontory Hall some time or other to see how things are going on there. I did not want to go so early in the season. I did not think I would go until we came north again in June. However, when it is over it will not have to be repeated, and my going down now will save the trouble of going down in June."

"Yes, Aunt Agrippina; and, indeed, I am very grateful to you. I do not like the indecorum of travelling alone under my peculiar circumstances."

"No, Gloria, I should hope not. But, my dear, we need not take all these heavy trunks down the river with us. We will pack and store them in the city here until we return or send for them."

"Just as you please, Aunt Agrippina," answered Gloria, who was content to yield all minor points so that she might gain her chief one.

Miss Agrippina De Crespiigny, however, had yielded to Gloria's will merely because she knew she had no power over her to prevent her from carrying out her plan; and she thought there would be less "scandal" in Gloria's journey if it appeared to be sanctioned by the old lady's company.

She had much hope also that her presence and her influence over "the sensible young fisherman" might have the effect of preventing the reunion of which she so much disapproved; and besides, in any case, she felt that it would be the proper course in her "to see the mad girl through the affair, however it might end."

That same afternoon Miss De Crespiigny's and Gloria's numerous travelling trunks were packed and sent off to be stored.

The two ladies, with their little retinue of servants, whom they could not well leave behind, and a few portmanteaus that held all they would require for the voyage, set out on the steamer "Carrier."

After a pleasant run they reached La Compté's Landing.

A little boat put off from the shore to meet the steamer, which lay to a few hundred yards from the shore.

As the two ladies stood upon the deck Miss Agrippina pulled her thick veil over her face, and stooped and whispered to her companion:

"We need not let anybody know who we are—at least for the present."

"My dear Aunt Agrippina, your precaution is quite useless. The old flagman is himself in the boat that is coming to take us off, and he has already recognised us! Look how he is bowing and scraping, and even dancing and capering, to the risk of upsetting the little skiff," exclaimed Gloria.

"Oh, dear, these abominable old people with

their childish delight in seeing old faces again!" said Miss Agrippina.

"Oh, aunty, I think it is beautiful," murmured Gloria.

The boat came on and was soon alongside, two young serving men rowing, and the old flagman, who ought to have been steering, standing up in the stern waving his hat.

The ladies were assisted by the officers of the steamer to enter the boat with their servants and light luggage.

"We want a boat to take us to Sandy Isle, can we get one?" inquired the old lady.

"Oh, yes, Miss Aggravater, yer can have this one," answered the old flagman, who seemed to be in command.

In a very few minutes they reached the shore, where the page and the two maids were directed to land, and take the portmanteaus with them, and wait in the passengers' room of the boat-house until the return of their mistress.

Then the boat put about to take the party to Sandy Isle.

And now, as the hour drew near which was to decide her destiny, Gloria became deeply disturbed.

How should she meet David Lindsay? How would he receive her? Was he at Sandy Isle? Was he well? Was he living? As this last contingency came into her mind for the first time in regard to David Lindsay, she realised how much she loved him, and knew by the spasm that seized her heart, how—

"It is a fearful thing

To love whom death may touch!"

She would willingly have questioned the old flagman, who might have told her, but the words, like Macbeth's "Amen, stuck in 'her' throat."

She could not ask. She could only bear the agony of suspense as best she might.

She kept her eyes fixed up the bay, where the Mecca of her soul might first be expected to come into view, but not very soon; for she knew the little, insignificant speck of earth standing out in the waters of the bay, and called Sandy Isle, could not be seen at any great distance from its own low shore.

But, nevertheless, she kept her eyes fixed up the bay to catch the first sight of the little isle, with its humble cottage, dear to her memory for the happiest days of her childhood spent under its lowly roof. And dear Dame Lindsay! she thought. It was little more than fifteen months since she had seen Dame Lindsay—on that memorable Christmas morning after David Lindsay had saved her life!

She had not seen her since! Dame Lindsay would certainly be on the Island, whether David were there or not; for though he was often absent at work or on business, she never left home except in cases of sickness or death. How would Dame Lindsay receive her as David's wife? Would she cherish a righteous resentment against her for having discarded David at the very altar? Gloria could not be sure; though the old woman had a very tender, loving, and forgiving heart, she had also a very strong sense of right.

But, at any rate, Gloria thought, however justly incensed the dame might be, she would relent toward one who had come to atone for her wrong-doing, and to make David happy at last.

If—oh, if David should be on the island! If he should be well! if he should be living! Again at this last question an agony of fear seized her heart and almost stopped its pulsation!

Fishermen so often endangered their lives in following their business! If David Lindsay should have been drowned!

She opened her lips to ask the old flagman if the Lindsays still lived on the island, but the words died on her trembling lips.

It was strange that the mere possibility of the young man's death should be present to her mind as an overwhelming terror, while the great probability of the aged woman's decease never once occurred to her.

So in a suspense that was almost mortal, she sat with pallid cheeks and strained eyes watching for the first sight of Sandy Isle.

Miss De Crespigny on her part was quite as silent, and also somewhat troubled in mind. Her conscience was reproaching her for her neglect to prepare Gloria for the shock she would receive on reaching Sandy Isle, when she first learned of the death of her dear old friend, the Widow Lindsay.

That was the reason why Miss De Crespigny did not dare to ask any questions of the old boatman; and she even maintained a severe, repellent countenance lest the old flagman should volunteer any news and suddenly betray the fact of Dame Lindsay's decease to Gloria. For Miss De Crespigny thought that since the secret had been kept so long it had best be guarded still, until they should reach Sandy Isle, where of course it must be immediately discovered.

In any case the little cottage on the isle was a better place for the hearing of ill news than an open boat on the water could be.

So Miss Agrippina maintained a strict silence and a stern demeanour in order to discourage all attempts at conversation.

But it is not in the nature of an old servant to hold his tongue long, under any circumstances, much less under those that surrounded the old flagman, who had just met two ladies whom he had not seen for more than a year, and to whom he had marvellous things to relate concerning the great changes that had passed over the place since they had left the neighbourhood.

At length the old flagman could keep silence no longer. In spite of Miss De Crespigny's grim silence and forbidding aspect, the old man smiled in his most winning way, and "insinuated" his word:

"Maybe, mist'ess, yer hasn't heern what have happened at de islan' since yer been away?"

"Do you hold your tongue and attend to your tiller, or you will drown us all! These waters are very dangerous just here," said Miss De Crespigny, frowning darkly.

"La, Miss Aggravater, dere ain't no danger here! Why, dis place is as safe as safe! Why, any little child could steer here! An' I was only axin' of yer ef yer knowed what had hap—"

"Hold your tongue! If you contradict me again, or even open your mouth, I will report you to your master."

The old man bowed sulkily, and became mute.

"What has—" began Gloria, whose suspense had become the most acute agony. "What—" but the words faded on her failing lips. She could no more have uttered them than if she had been palsied by nightmare.

But they were now drawing near the Island. Gloria half arose and strained her eyes to gaze at a strange sight about half a mile away. She could scarcely trust the evidence of her sight, and as she gazed, and the boat drew nearer to the object of her curiosity, her doubts and perplexity grew into amazement.

(To be Continued.)

A GOOD WORD FOR THE CROW.

LET me speak for the crow. Last year as I was harrowing corn with a vibrating harrow having teeth (you know it is a noisy thing), it uncovered a great number of white grubs, which you could see all about the ground. They are very destructive to vegetation of all kinds. They ate or destroyed thousands of hills of corn that year. You could see the track of the grubs as they travelled to get something to eat, for they travel when in search of food. You could see the surface of the ground a little elevated, and checked when the surface is hard and dry.

Well, you see, when I was harrowing, as soon as the crows heard the harrow work, they would come and light on the ground that was being harrowed, and the fresher the better they liked it; when going one way they would light after I had passed along; when I returned, and came within six or eight rods of them, they would rise gently and circle around in the rear again. I have counted as many as seventeen grubs that one crow has picked up at one lighting. They

take any and everything, large and small—that is, worms, grubs, and beetles. Crows can't pull corn when planted with a machine; we have no fear of them from that source. Finally, wherever civilisation is, there are rooks and crows.—I. E.

CONVICTED.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT dawn the next morning, when only a few faint flushes lit up the grey of the eastern sky, and mountains and gulf began to be seen with distinctness, before the goat-herd went forth to their morning labour, or the vine-dressers were astir, the household at Mr. Strange's dwelling were in full activity.

The glazed doors of the dining-room were open upon the veranda, the air being warm, and the small oval table was spread with a luxurious breakfast which combined both English and Greek dishes.

Lord Kingscourt came down dressed in a suit which his host had long since placed at his disposal, his own having been worn out.

He found Mr. Strange waiting for him. They exchanged friendly and courteous greetings, and before a shade of embarrassment could fall upon either, old Saba and a housemaid brought in the meats and coffee.

The meal was eaten nearly in silence. Both men were pale and sorrow-worn.

Alex did not make her appearance, and although the young earl started and looked up at every sound with a throbbing expectancy, he could hardly have borne the agony of a second parting with her.

The breakfast over, the host led the way to the veranda. The two men seated themselves side by side upon a wooden settle, and one stared at the mountains, and the other at the grey sea, already beginning to shimmer and gleam in the growing light.

"Your horse will soon be around," said Mr. Strange, arousing himself from his vague thoughtfulness. "Briggs is breakfasting in the kitchen. I have sent for half a dozen labourers to escort you to Athens, my lord. The men will ride on mules. I have placed my horse at your disposal, and Briggs will ride Alex's pony. The animals can be sent back by your attendants to-morrow."

"Before I go," said the young lord, "I wish to express to you my fervent sense of gratitude for all your kindness and hospitality of the past four months."

"I would have done the same for any one," responded Mr. Strange, wearily; "but I wish that Providence had sent you to some other door than mine. I feel very bitter when I think of my poor little Alex, whose whole life must be darkened—"

"For no fault of her own or mine," exclaimed the earl, hastily. "Pardon me, Mr. Strange, but has not the past night, with its opportunities for reflection, brought to you any change of purpose, any misgiving as to your own wisdom in separating Alex and me? I love her so well that I care not what this mystery may be to which you allude so strangely. I shall always love and honour her above all women. No matter what cloud of sorrow may hang over her, I shall esteem myself honoured by an alliance with her—more honoured than if she were a queen."

Mr. Strange shook his head at this impetuous outburst.

"It cannot be," he said, sorrowfully. "Do not compel me to go over all the ground we traversed last night. It is impossible that my daughter should ever marry."

"Can no argument move you? Will no consideration for Alex's happiness induce you to consent to our union?" demanded the earl in a passionate sorrow. "It must be some awful mystery that can thus wreck two lives."

"It is; a mystery so awful that I dare not breathe it. Let us not speak of it again," said Mr. Strange, hollowly.

"Whatever it is it cannot appal me, nor affect my love or fidelity to Alex," said our hero, firmly. "It is she whom I love—"

"Your disappointment seems bitter and terrible now, but I have borne a worse agony and lived. You came of a grand old race. The Kingscourts have ever prided themselves upon their bravery and virtue. No Kingscourt ever dishonoured his name or made a mesalliance. In time you will find a fair and high-born bride, whose name will add lustre to your own, and years hence, when your children grow up around you, there will be no shadow of shame or mystery to darken their lives or blight your own."

"If I do not marry Alex, I shall go to my grave unwedded," declared the earl, in a tone that carried conviction with it. "You seem to know the Kingscourts, Mr. Strange."

"I have heard of your family," he said, briefly. "The earls of Kingscourt are rich, powerful and proud—one of the noblest and best families of England. Anyone who has been in England must have heard of them."

"You have been there?"

Mr. Strange bowed assent.

"You are of English birth, I am sure!" cried the earl. "Yet during all my stay here you have never talked of England. Is it many years since you were there?"

Again Mr. Strange bowed.

"Perhaps," said the earl, "we may have mutual acquaintances. I have never heard you mention an English name, but I might perhaps be able to give you some information concerning old acquaintances. You have never taken an English newspaper, Alex has said."

"Because from the hour of my exile I have never cared for English news. I did see the 'Times' many years ago. I never care to see it again."

"And there is not one person in all England of whose welfare you would like to hear?" asked the earl, wonderingly.

The blonde face of his host grew ashen; sudden and overwhelming agitation seized upon him. He averted his face that it might not be seen.

"There is no one," he said, huskily. "No one in England, or in all the world!"

"Did you ever see my father?" asked the earl, presently, wishing that he could establish some basis of common sympathy with his host.

"I have seen him," was the reply.

"He died six years ago," said the young lord.

"My mother survived him only a year."

An overmastering impulse came upon the reticent to hear again names he had known years before—the same impulse which, during the earl's stay in his house, he had resisted.

"There were people he had once loved—were they living or dead? He had not heard of them in sixteen years."

Perhaps they had been sleeping for years in their ancestral vaults. News from home—he grew suddenly mad with anxiety to hear it. For sixteen years he had not met an Englishman or seen an English newspaper. What might there not be to hear?

"I heard many great names when I was in England years ago," he said, unsteadily. "I suppose that a new generation of peers sits in the House of Lords, a new generation of commoners in the Lower House. I know that Victoria still reigns; I know from the Athens journals the political news of the day. I suppose that I am as conversant with English politics as yourself, my lord. But I should like to hear something of the social news, to beguile the time while we are waiting for the horses. The men will soon be here. I hear them stirring. Who are the most prominent men in England socially?"

The earl mentioned several names, none of which appeared to interest his listener.

"I suppose that my guardian would be regarded as a social leader," observed Kingscourt. "I do not mean that he is my guardian now, but he was my guardian during the year of my minority after my father's death. But he is not married—"

"Your guardian?"

"Yes, the Marquis of Mountheron—"

Mr. Strange started as if he had been shot. A sound of the trampling of feet in a rear yard diverted our hero's attention.

"The men are coming!" he said.

Mr. Strange turned away his visage, which was distorted with pain. Something in his eyes, a peculiar wildness of anguish, testified that the name he had just heard had been a barbed arrow that quivered in his heart.

"The men are not coming just yet, after all," said the earl, sinking back on his seat. "It was a false alarm."

"You were speaking of your form or guardian," said Mr. Strange, in a curiously muffled voice. "He is not married?"

"No, but he is extremely popular in society. He is handsome, high-bred, one of the finest gentlemen in Europe. He might have contracted a fitting marriage, I do not doubt, but for years he has worshipped at one shrine with unswerving devotion, but without much success. Before I left home, however, his engagement to the lady was rumoured."

"And the lady?"

"Is one of the most beautiful women in England—a beauty and a belle, past her youth and spring-time, but in the glorious summer of loveliness. She is the daughter of the Duke of Clyffebourne. She is the Lady Vivian Clyffe!"

A low, strange cry came from Mr. Strange's lips. His body drooped helplessly forward, as with faintness or paralysis. The horses and mules now came in sight, led by the men who were to serve as escort, and the young earl did not notice his companion.

"You may have heard both the names I have mentioned, Mr. Strange," he said, arising. "Eighteen years ago all Europe rang with the name of Mountheron—and the names of the present marquis and of the Lady Vivian Clyffe were brought prominently into notice. I refer to the Mountheron tragedy, that convulsed all England with horror—"

The men came up to the veranda with a clattering noise, speaking loudly.

Mr. Strange arose, clinging to a pillar for support.

"You must go," he said, in that strangely muffled voice he had before employed. "I have but one favour to ask. Did I ask it last night? When you leave this place, do not mention me or Alex to any human being. The only good you can do us is to leave us to this safe obscurity. Good-bye, Heaven bless you!"

He wrung the earl's hand, and moved staggering into the dwelling.

Briggs was at hand.

Kingscourt mounted, the escort followed suit, and the little cavalcade moved down the glen in the direction of the gorge.

At a distance of a few paces the earl wheeled in his saddle and looked back. Mr. Strange was nowhere visible.

But Lord Kingscourt knew, with the intuitions of love, that behind one of those shuttered windows the sweet eyes of Alex were looking out at him.

He raised his hat in a last salute, and setting his features sternly, rode on.

He traversed the gorge, which was dark, narrow, wild, and in places almost impassable, and two or three hours later came out on the highway leading from Corinth to Athens. The progress of the little cavalcade now became more rapid.

The earl kept a sharp look-out for bandits, with a lurking fear that Spiridion might again attack him and take him prisoner.

He mentioned this apprehension to one of the Greeks, a dusky-skinned vinedresser, who laughed as he answered:

"No danger, milordo—no danger at all. After Spiridion let you go last summer the troops made this region so hot for the brigands that they beat a retreat in the direction of Corfu, where they have remained ever since. The soldiers have long since given over the pursuit, milordo. Spiridion is too cunning for them."

"Then we need have no fears," said the earl, cheerfully.

"It might be different a day or two later," said the vinedresser, cautiously, lowering his

voice. "You see, milordo, the retreat near this place was made by nature for a bandit's stronghold. Spiridion spends months of every year here, going away when he scents danger or business is dull. Last night I met one of his men on the road, a scout sent ahead to see that the way is clear. He is the son of an old friend of mine, and told me that the brigands have been dissatisfied all the summer on account of the young lady knowing their secret, and that, much as they preferred to remain in this vicinity, they had refused to return until Spiridion had promised that the young lady should be prevented from doing them an injury. The whole band is not far off. They'll be back in their den to-night."

The earl started.

A conviction that Alex was in peril tempted him to turn back.

Further reflection decided him to continue his journey to Athens according to his original intention.

"I wish to send a letter to Messer Stasso by you when you return to-morrow," he said. "And I want you to tell him what you have told me. The young lady may be in great danger."

"I will convey the letter and the news to Messer Stasso to-morrow evening," promised the vinedresser, with an evident sincerity.

The journey was made without incident worth mentioning.

They stopped at Magara to lunch a little after noon, and pushed onward after only an hour's rest.

It was evening when they entered Athens. The earl proceeded directly to the hotel at which he had stopped six or seven months before, and where his luggage still remained. Comfortable rooms were prepared for him. He ordered his guards to be well cared for and started on their return home in the morning.

His portmanteau was brought to him. It was locked as he had left it, and, having lost his keys, the services of a locksmith were required before he could examine its contents.

His clothing was in good order. Better still, his letter of credit and well-filled purse, which he had chosen to leave behind him on his perilous journey, were intact.

He changed his borrowed garments for his own, and ordered supper. Afterwards, he procured writing materials and wrote a letter of warning to Mr. Strange, informing him of Spiridion's return to the neighbourhood of the Strange villa and that harm was intended Miss Strange.

This letter he sealed, and the next morning Briggs delivered it, with a sum of money as a reward to the vinedresser, whose information had prompted the letter.

A liberal sum of money was also given to the others of the party, and Briggs saw them started on their return journey, mounted on their mules, and leading their horses.

The first movement of the young earl that morning was to seek out the chief of police, and notify him that Spiridion had returned to his old haunts.

The chief was so apathetic as to suggest his sympathy, and possible collusion, with the bandits; but Lord Kingscourt obtained a promise from him that he would use every effort to capture them.

The earl's next visit was to the English consul. He received hearty congratulations upon his escape from the brigands, and his recovery from illness, and found it hard to parry the questions that were asked in regard to his recent host.

His reticence left the impression that he had spent his months of illness in a vinedresser's cottage, and he did not correct it.

He found himself the hero of the hour. English visitors and residents called upon him.

He was invited to dinners and balls, but declined every invitation, avoided speaking about his adventures, and took passage in the first steamer for Trieste.

That steamer—an Austrian Lloyd's—sailed upon the second day after his return to Athens,

which was Saturday, and the earl sailed in her.

"I shall come back again," he said to himself. "I have not bid Alex good-bye for ever. Her destiny and mine are entwined in a way that will defy fate itself to separate them. She is mine, and I shall return to claim her. Whatever mystery lies between us—I will never give her up. Never!"

At twilight of that same day, when the good Austrian Lloyd's steamer had left behind her the shores of Greece, and the Earl of Kingscourt paced the deck, sorrowful and thoughtful, struggling with his despair, Alex Strange walked forth into her rose-garden.

Her father had remained in his own room from the hour of the earl's departure, declaring himself unable to see even her.

The earl's letter had been sent in to him and he had sent it to his daughter; but he had declined to see the vinedresser, who had then made his report to Alex and been liberally rewarded.

The girl had at first given way to her grief, but she was by nature brave and heroic, and for her father's sake had taken up her burden quietly, intending to conceal her sorrow even from his eyes.

His refusal to see her on the ground of his illness was an added wound, and her eyes were full of desolation as she now walked among her roses.

"What can all this mystery be?" she said to herself. "Until Lord Kingscourt came, papa seemed cheerful, even happy. But since the earl came papa has been strange and not at all like himself. He seems occupied with things of which I know nothing. Why is it that I must never marry? What is this awful curse that rests upon me? Why am I born a pariah? Why would people scorn and loathe me, if they knew all; why would they refuse me even the shelter of their roofs?"

She speculated upon the subject, indulging in various unpleasant theories, all wide of the truth, and shivered at her own thoughts. It did not occur to her that she had a right to know the secret which had blighted so many lives. Nothing could have induced her to seek her father's confidence as long as he desired to withhold it; but it seemed to her that the most appalling certainty would be easier to bear than this horrible suspense and nameless dread.

She paused down the walk, behind a clump of roses, and sat down upon a garden seat. The moon was shining. The dusky mountains and gleaming sea made a beautiful picture in the full mellow flood of light. The girl rested her face on her hand, and gave herself up to her bitter musings.

In the midst of them, a sudden rustling of the vines on the garden wall startled her. She sprang up, and, at the same instant, a man leaped over the enclosure and stood before her.

He was Spiridon!

At the sight of him the warnings of her lover and the vinedresser flashed upon the mind of Alex Strange, bringing with them a natural and vivid alarm. Yet she had sufficient presence of mind to conceal her terror, and while she involuntarily retreated a few paces, she greeted the bandit chief with pleasant courtesy.

His appearance struck her as unusually sinister: his bold, black eyes gleamed with a strange light, as of expectant triumph. Something in his steady, intolerable gaze; something in the expression of his dusky, skinned face, brought a quick blush to the girl's pale cheeks.

"You see, my young lady," said Spiridon, lightly, "we are back again in our old quarters. Pursuit has blown over; the Government has settled back into another long season of apathy; the road is at our mercy with all the golden fruit to be gathered upon it; we are again settled in our southern stronghold for the winter—and I have hastened to pay my respects to you."

"Will you not come into the house?" asked the girl, politely, retreating another step.

"Thank you, no. I remembered your old habit of walking in your garden, and watched here last night for you for hours, but you did not come forth. I had been waiting nearly an hour

to-night, and was growing impatient, when you appeared. What I have to say to you can best be said out in the open air. House walls savour to me of prison," and the bandit chief shrugged his shoulders.

"What can you have to say to me?" asked Alex.

"Several things. But, first of all, I wish to speak of your late guest. I hear, from a peasant that the Milordo Anglesmo has stayed under your roof all the summer," and he regarded the girl jealously. "I hear that he only left your house two days since. Is this true?"

"What of it?" asked Alex, haughtily. "We are accountable to no one for the manner in which we dispense our hospitality. You were here two months once."

"And this Milordo Anglesmo has been here nearly four months," interrupted Spiridon, suddenly. "It is well for him that he is gone. By Jupiter! If I had but returned a day or two earlier, I'd have taken him back to his old quarters and held him again for ransom—or killed him."

"Is this what you wished to say to me?" asked Miss Strange, calmly.

"Partly. When I released him at your request, to keep my oath to you and win your favour, I expected that he would go to Athens, and probably to England. If I had even dreamed that he would have remained in your house I would have killed him!" and Spiridon's eyes lighted up with a savage glow. "But he is gone now. The day he returns to this neighbourhood will be an unlucky one for him, I promise him."

"If this is all you have to say, I may as well return to the house."

"Stay! I have more to say. My men are dissatisfied because the secret of our retreat is in a girl's keeping. I would trust you, but they are uneasy. I have come to state their grievance and settle upon some decision that will satisfy them and me."

The girl bowed her head, but did not answer. She wondered what was coming.

"This den of ours is the best retreat for our purpose in all Greece," continued Spiridon. "I defy anyone to discover it unaided. Yet the men feel insecure and grumble, believing themselves at the mercy of a girl who may betray them."

"I have given my oath to keep their secret."

"I know, and I trust you. But I want to put it out of your power to betray us. You kept the secret of my identity when I was in your house and helpless, telling no one but your father. You have shown that you are not talkative. That you are brave as a young lioness is proven by your visit to our retreat—bearing Spiridon in his den, backed as he was by a score of human bloodhounds. You are beautiful as a star—radiant as the morning—light of foot as a mountain goat—fearless as an angel. All these great qualities betoken that nature created you for a grand destiny."

He drew a step nearer to her, his red fez cap hanging at the back of his head, his bold eyes growing bolder, his dusky skin glowing.

"Yes," he said, "nature created you for a glorious destiny. Not to rule over a quiet household to direct a few servants, to plan a flower garden," and he looked around him contemptuously; "but to rule over fierce men—to be a queen over a band of robbers, whose name is a terror even in foreign lands—to be the bride of their terrible chief, Spiridon!"

"And that will never be," said Alex, quietly. "I have no ambition for the 'grand destiny' you have marked out for me. I decline your offer."

"You will not marry me?" cried the bandit chief, amazed.

"I will not."

"But by Jupiter! you shall!" ejaculated Spiridon, his eyes blazing. "You know too much to retain your freedom. I love you, and my love is like that of the tiger, fierce and terrible as my hatred. I swear by Our Lady that you shall be mine; with your consent or without it."

She turned and moved swiftly in the direction of the house.

She had not taken ten steps, when Spiridon, bounding after her, seized her roughly in a fierce grasp.

"I shall not let you go so easily," he exclaimed, between his teeth, in a hissing voice. "I am not to be baulked like this by a mere girl, a tender thing I can crush in my hand. I am determined to make you my wife. You know too much to be allowed to go free. Your beauty fairly maddens me. By Jupiter! Refuse me again at your peril!"

His eyes blazed into hers. She tore herself from his clasp, and turned at bay.

He uttered a shrill, clear, low whistle that sounded like the cry of a night-bird. As by magic, two men in picturesque garb somewhat like his own leaped over the wall and ran to his relief. These were trusted members of his band.

"Seize her," cried Spiridon. "Away with her to the retreat."

As he spoke he tore off his wide sash and made a gesture to throw it over the girl's head.

But she was too quick for him. One moment she had stood as if stupefied. Now, with a scream that thrilled the night with horror, she ran like a deer in the direction of the house.

The bandits flew after her.

The girl's foot caught in a projecting root and she nearly fell headlong. In the sudden halt thus imposed upon her, her enemies overtook and seized her.

Spiridon flung his sash over her head. With a desperation born of mortal terror, she tore the folds from her face and uttered a second scream, shriller, louder than the first.

"Blight her!" cried Spiridon. "She'll have the household about our ears. Quick, men."

The servants came trooping from the house. A glazed door upon the veranda was flung open, and Mr. Strange leaped out into the garden. That wild appeal for help had brought him to the rescue.

One rapid glance of his keen blue eye informed him of his daughter's danger. Revolver in hand, he came down the garden walk at a bound. His servants, animated by his fearlessness, arms in hand, followed him.

The bandits made a movement to retreat, dragging their prisoner with them. Before they could reach the wall, Mr. Strange fired, and Spiridon dropped his captive, his left arm falling to his side.

The servants fired in concert, and one of the bandits was shot in the breast.

Spiridon drew his own revolver, turning at bay, but his confederates leaped the wall in mad haste, and were seen running swiftly towards the shelter of the nearest olive grove.

Left thus unsupported, the bandit chief glared at his enemies with a furious hatred. Alex had already flown to her father's side, and was beyond his reach.

Half a dozen armed men were ready to defend her with their lives, and only too eager to compass his death.

Nothing remained but to retire. He restored his weapon to his pocket.

"You cannot fire upon a wounded and unarmed man," he said, hoarsely.

"But we can capture him and deliver him to the mercy of the laws he has outraged," cried Mr. Strange, advancing upon him.

The outlaw placed his right hand on the garden wall and leaped over it. A mocking laugh came back to the ears of his enemies, and he was seen fleeing in the direction taken by his comrades.

Three or four shots rattled after him, going wide of the mark. Presently he disappeared, and the excited servants and labourers returned to the kitchen, while Alex and her father entered the drawing-room.

(To be Continued.)

LORD HARTINGTON has laid the foundation-stone of a public hall to be erected in memory of George Stephenson, at Chesterfield. The hall will cost £13,000, and is to be used for scientific and educational purposes.



[FAIR WOMEN.]

THE BLACK GHOST.

PETER TOLMAN had died, not wholly in the odour of sanctity, and I was sent down to the quaint old town in which he had lived to be present at his funeral, read his will, and attend to some legal details concerning the settlement of his estate.

It was only a chance which thrust this greatness upon me. I was recently admitted to a partnership in the legal firm of Wynne, Applegate and Co., Joel Wynne, the head of the firm, being my uncle.

He had been Peter Tolman's attorney for half a century or thereabouts, for the old man was eighty when he died, and had been in business since he was twenty-five, and in law as constantly as at business, for he was a quarrelsome customer—one of those men made to be the natural food of lawyers.

But just at this inopportune time—and Peter Tolman was that perverse that he was sure to die at an inopportune time—my uncle was laid up with the gout, and I was commissioned, as I have said, to go down to Coningsby and attend his funeral.

"Now, Wallace," said my uncle, as I went to see him to get my latest instructions, "there is sure to be a quarrel over this will. Peter Tolman couldn't have died without leaving the seeds of a quarrel behind him. I'm tired of the old crumudgeon's affairs any way, and I mean to pass them over to you. So mind you ingratiate yourself with the widow, and get the job well

into your hands. It will be a very pretty start in life for you. If the old man's heirs keep his reputation good they will be worth five hundred a year to you."

"Thank you, uncle," I said; "but you speak of a widow. I did not know that Mr. Tolman was ever married."

"No more he was," growled my uncle, a twinge coming on him just then, "at least at the time of his death. But I suppose he must have had a wife at some time—though there's a mystery about that—since he has had a son and a daughter-in-law and a grandchild for these twenty years or so. And a pretty mess of hot water they've always been in. The son is dead now, but his widow and her daughter will claim to be the heirs, while this precious will which you are to carry down and read to them cuts them off with scarcely the traditional shilling."

"What a shame," I said. "And to whom does the money go?"

"Well, as near as I can find out, the woman named in the will is a far-away cousin of Peter Tolman, and was once, at some early day, a flame of his. She is an old maid, at any rate, hard on to seventy, as deaf as a post, and with six thousand pounds already."

"What on earth possessed the man to make such a will?" I exclaimed.

"Satan!" growled my uncle—"the same spirit that has possessed him ever since I knew him."

"And what will become of the daughter and her child?"

"Heaven knows, I don't. Only if they don't fight the will they are idiots. They have lived with Peter Tolman for ten years past, have borne his whims and depravities like two angels. They will have possession of the house at his death, and I would fight that old maid till the last copper of the money was spent, if I were Mrs. Tolman. You may tell her that for me."

"Are there any grounds?"

"It's a lawyer's business to make grounds," said my uncle. "Take a week to study up the details, if you like. You'll be sure to find something to hang a case upon."

"Was the old man perfectly sound in his wits?"

"As sound one day of his life as another. Any man is crazy who goes to law as he did."

"Was the son certainly legitimate?"

"It is my opinion that he was, but very like Peter Tolman, with his usual perversity, may have destroyed the proofs."

"What would be his reason for doing so?"

"Simply hatred of the widow and her child. She's a soft-hearted little thing, and gave in to him altogether too much."

"It has the look of an ugly case," I said. "But if they want to fight it I'll do my best."

I set out for Coningsby that evening, arriving there for breakfast next day. Peter Tolman, with all his faults, had always been hospitable to his friends, and my uncle had been in the habit of staying at his house with all the freedom which he would have felt at an hotel.

But I, being a stranger, felt a little diffidence about intruding upon a family already thrown somewhat into confusion by recent bereavement at so early an hour. I, therefore, went at once to the hotel and breakfasted, and then strolled over at my leisure to the handsome place of Peter Tolman, which was scarcely a quarter of a mile from the station.

It was a fine old place; a good lawn, a thrifty farm, a well-built brick house with trees about it.

As I stood upon the doorsteps I began to feel the hush which lay upon the house.

"Mrs. Tolman and Miss Blanche are not yet down," said a servant. "Breakfast will be served in a quarter of an hour. Will you go to your room before the bell rings?"

"No," I replied. "I have breakfasted at the hotel, and I will wait for the ladies here."

I had scarcely finished speaking before a rustle on the stairs announced their approach. I looked up as they entered, and beheld two rather striking-looking women.

The elder, a slight, pale creature, in widow's weeds, deepened a little, in all probability, by the recent bereavement, with regular and even handsome features, and the manner of a lady. She announced herself at once as Mrs. Tolman, and presented me to her daughter.

Blanche Tolman was an utterly different creature from her mother. Not yet, I thought, out of her teens, she was still two inches taller than her mother.

She was rounder than her mother, also of a less elegant but more voluptuous build. For pallor there were roses; in place of dignity, blitheness and strength; instead of a delicate, womanly reserve of manner, a frankness that was not bold, energy and dash that yet were not unwomanly.

Two very interesting women, I said to myself, they were, and proceeded, accordingly, to study them.

It was a substantially-furnished and neatly-kept room into which I was ushered.

The breakfast-table was charmingly spread, with a finer display of silver than, I fancy, was the usual custom of the house.

Mrs. Tolman, sitting behind the steaming silver urn, presided with grace; and Miss Blanche, in her simple black wrapper, and with her air of slightly-repressed surprise, made a very pretty ornament to the table.

"Mr. Tolman has had a most fortunate life," I said, after I had delivered the message from my uncle and placed myself upon a secure footing with the ladies. "It must have been hard for him to die and leave so pleasant a home as this behind him."

"It is always hard to die," said Mrs. Tolman, "but Mr. Tolman was quite resigned in his last hours."

"So resigned," said Blanche a little abruptly, I thought, "that I fancy there is trouble brewing somewhere, and I fear it is for us. I never knew grandpa so quiet and comfortable as he was just before he died, unless he had a rod in pickle for somebody."

I smiled—it was impossible to help it—at the young lady's very shrewd suspicion.

"I suppose it would be unprofessional," she went on, "for you to say anything about the nature of the will in your possession, but I confess I should not be surprised if we were utterly disinherited. Grandpa would never have bidden me so affectionate a farewell if he had intended to leave me any money."

"You will pardon me, under the circumstances," I said, "since you have referred to the will if I inquire whether you have a relative, by name Miss Betsey Standish? Such a person is, I believe, named in the will, and it might be best that she should be present at the reading of it."

"There is such a relative, I believe," said Mrs. Tolman, growing a little pale, "but she is a very distant connection, and a very old woman. She live's a day's journey from here, and I had not thought of notifying her."

"It is perhaps just as well," I said. "Certainly, under the circumstances, no blame can attach to you. Are you quite sure, madame, that the will in my possession is the last will of the deceased? My uncle suggested to me caution upon that point. I confess to you that I should very much prefer to find a later document than the one in my possession, and would suggest to you the propriety of carefully examining the papers of the deceased, in the hope of bringing to light some such document."

Mrs. Tolman was by this time very pale, while Miss Blanche's face was crimson. They had both penetrated my meaning, and the sense of injury affected them very differently.

"You are certainly the proper person to institute such a search, Mr. Wynne," said Mrs. Tolman. "I shall deliver up to you the keys of Mr. Tolman's secretary directly after breakfast."

I spent the entire morning ransacking the old gentleman's private desk. I found many things of curious import, but nothing that could invalidate the will.

And yet, the more I saw of these two women, the more I anathematised the luck which had left them subject to the whims of such a man as Peter Tolman. It was useless to torment them before their time, however, so I held my peace till after the funeral.

The company gathered slowly to hear the will read, and no lights had been brought in. Altogether there were eight or ten of us.

I had risen to send for lights, when suddenly Mrs. Tolman caught my sleeve in an excited manner, and pointed towards the old-fashioned chimney-piece.

I looked in the direction indicated. At first I saw nothing strange, but as I looked steadily, I saw the well-defined figure of a man in black standing upon the hearth and reaching up to a portrait which hung over the mantel—the portrait, as I afterwards learned, of some dead ancestor.

One long and very fleshy-looking finger on the right hand rested, apparently, upon the face of the portrait, though as I stepped aside for an instant to get a better view of the face of the intruder, I thought the finger was not so much resting upon the portrait as pointing to it. At that moment Mrs. Tolman fainted; I turned to her assistance, and when I looked back again the figure had disappeared. Mrs. Tolman was revived in a few moments.

"Did you see him?" she asked of me, excitedly, with her first conscious breath.

"See whom?" I replied.

"Father Tolman!" she ejaculated, with evident fear and horror in her tones.

I quieted Mrs. Tolman as well as I could. Candles were then brought, and we proceeded to the reading of the will.

When the contents of it were fairly divulged there was more or less of excitement in the room. The general feeling was one of indignation that the widow and her daughter were so unjustly treated.

"Who was Betsey Standish?" said one of the cousins. "A cross and crafty old curmudgeon, like Peter Tolman, who never gave a shilling in charity in her life, and never did a relative a good turn."

At this moment an old servant, a shrewd, grey-headed woman, yet superstitious withal, as women of her class are wont to be, touched my arm.

"Please, sir," she said, "did you see Peter Tolman, a standing on the hearth—a pointing to his dead great-grandfather up there. I see him, sir, as plain as day. 'Twas that, I guess, that made Mrs. Tolman faint away. It was all in black—not like a common ghost at all. He was too hard and cruel like. But I tell ye what 'tis, there's another will somewhere, and that's just what he came back to say to you. And now do ye hunt, and hunt lively, and make sure you find it, afore these two pretty creatures has to go out of this house that's all the home they've got, and airn their own livin'."

The old woman left me with this, and, after bidding good-evening to Mrs. Tolman and Blanche, and promising to call on them next morning, I went to the hotel.

I could see at once that, under the circumstances, it would be of the greatest consequence that we should be able to prove the legitimacy of the son of Peter Tolman and the actuality of his marriage with the mother of Miss Blanche.

As I understood matters, there might be some difficulty concerning the first point.

If it could be established beyond controversy that Miss Blanche was the legitimate heir of her grandfather, it seemed to me that, with the pretty faces of those two women to plead in my favour, no jury in the country would fail to bring in a verdict for the plaintiffs.

Having breakfasted, I set out for the Tolman place.

I found Mrs. Tolman and Blanche already astir, with tearful faces, packing up such articles as they could claim for their own, preparatory to a removal.

"Let us reason a little about this matter," I said. "It may not be so very difficult a matter to break this certainly most unjust will. It is quite certain, I presume, that your deceased husband, madame, was the legitimate son of Peter Tolman."

"Most certainly he was," replied Mrs. Tolman, with some indignation.

"The first thing, then, is to be able to prove that fact. I will search the town records," I said.

"You will find nothing, I am sure," said Mrs. Tolman, sadly. "It was precisely like him to prevent any such proof of his marriage being preserved, in order that he might hold the fortune of his wife and children absolutely in his own control."

I was young then, and I could hardly conceive of such desperate wilfulness. But it resulted as she had predicted.

There was no doubt in any of our minds that the son had been his lawful heir; but there was absolutely not a scrap of documentary proof of the fact to be found.

"But your own marriage could be established, I suppose?" I said to Mrs. Tolman.

"The clergyman who married us is dead," she replied, "and"—growing a shade paler—"soon after we came here Mr. Tolman asked me for my marriage certificate, saying that it belonged among the family papers."

I had just looked over all the family documents, and knew that no such paper was to be found among them.

"There is only one thing left to do," I said.

"You can remain where you are for some weeks yet. Meantime, I shall visit Betsey Standish. She is old. I shall tell her that the heirs talk of contesting the will, and shall try and frighten her into some sort of compromise."

"I have no faith that you will succeed," said

Mrs. Tolman, "and I shall leave here at once. The place is like a prison to me."

In less than a week I had found time to seek out Miss Betsey Standish's remote residence, and to call on her.

On a high-backed chair sat Miss Betsey Standish, a grim, hard-featured old woman of seventy or more, in a black dress and a white starched cap. She looked at me inquiringly as the servant announced me.

"Mr. Wynne?" she said. "I thought that could be no other than my Cousin Tolman's lawyer. But surely Peter Tolman never employed this boy!"

"I beg your pardon, madame," I said, and explained to her the reason of my appearance in the place of my uncle.

"So Peter Tolman is dead," she said. "Well, we must all go some day. I have been advised by your firm of the disposition which he made of his property. You have come, I imagine, to conclude the business."

What an arbitrary and straightforward old creature she was, to be sure.

"I'm glad he had his senses at last," she went on. "I've been told he behaved very ill in his last years. Kept a couple of women about him under pretence that they had some claims upon him. I hope the place is cleaned of the baggage."

"I beg your pardon," I replied, "but I fear you have been misinformed. The ladies you refer to are the wife of Mr. Tolman's son, dead now for some years, and their daughter, a beautiful girl—"

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed the old woman, wrathfully. "Who told you that Peter Tolman ever had a son?—a legitimate son, that is. Whoever did, deceived you. Your uncle never believed that story, I'll warrant. Peter Tolman marry a wife while I lived—never!"

I spent another hour in trying to find out the nature of the influence which it was evident Betsey Standish had all her life exercised over Peter Tolman.

That she bore him no love was quite certain. That he hated her cordially came out with equal plainness before the interview was over.

I took counsel with my uncle, but he, no more than I, could see a way out of the difficulty.

"If that silly woman could have been made to stay in the house and defy its ghosts, black or white, it would have been something," he said. "As it is, I think they'll have to give it up, and it's a shame."

So the Tolmans were dismissed from our thoughts, save that now and then I couldn't help wondering whether that pretty Blanche had really gone to sewing or governessing.

A month later there came a brief letter from that same Miss Blanche. It was addressed to the firm, and begged that some one might be sent down for a consultation immediately.

"Whoop!" I exclaimed. "I do believe they have found a new will," and I set off for Coningsby in gay spirits.

I found that Mrs. Tolman and Blanche were established in a small cottage near the old place. It was a quiet little nook, quite away from the village, and seemed a rather lonely residence for two lonely women.

"I knew you wouldn't know the way to our little cottage," she said, "so I thought I'd come and show you."

I was about to engage a carriage to take us to the cottage, but Blanche interfered.

"Pardon me," she said. "Will you mind the walk? It is scarcely a mile."

"Certainly not," I replied, "if you prefer it."

"I do," she said. "I'll explain that, too, by-and-bye."

We were scarcely clear of the town, however, before Miss Tolman said to me:

"Now for my story. I have made a discovery, but until I know whether it amounts to anything I don't mean to say anything to mamma, since she has been already too much agitated."

"My dear Miss Blanche," I said, "you are a model of discretion. Let us go over to the old house."

Then she went on with her story.

"Soon after we were settled in the cottage,"

she said, "Jane Grey, an old servant of my grandfather, came to me privately, and told me that she, too, had seen what mamma saw on the day of the funeral. Both she and mamma agreed that the ghost pointed to the portrait over the mantelpiece. At first she couldn't think what that meant, but finally, lying awake one night, and trying to conjecture what errand Peter Tolman's ghost could have, and why it should point to that particular spot, she happened to think that the portrait rested against the chimney, and that very likely somewhere about that chimney something was hidden which he wanted to have found."

"So now," she said, "if I was you, Miss Blanche, I'd just get a man and go over and ransack that house, and I'd never leave brick upon brick of that chimney till I knew what that ghost came back for."

"So over I came to the old house, and I was not long, you may be sure, in effecting an entrance."

"I went straight to the library, and stood once more upon the hearth where the ghost had stood."

"It was the third night before we accomplished anything; but by that time we had the old picture down. Then it became apparent that the masonry behind it had been tampered with at some time. Then I got a trowel and a pick, and went at the wall. It soon opened before me, and there I found a small cavity or closet, and in the closet a tin box. The box was locked, and I had no key, but, after all the rest I had done, it was a small matter to cut the box open, as if it had been an oyster-can, there I found—well, just some dusty old papers."

You may be very certain I was not long in going through them. They proved to be a set of private papers, hidden at different intervals during a long and strange career.

First, Peter Tolman's own marriage-certificate. How I longed to shake it in the face of obdurate old Betsey Standish! Then the record of his son's birth.

Next, in order of time, the missing certificate of his son's marriage; then the record of Miss Blanche's birth; and, last of all, a will later by some months than the document which I had read to the heirs upon the funeral day!

But the strangest thing of all was the preface to the will. It went back, and told, as only Peter Tolman could tell it, the story of his life. Of his acquaintance with Betsey Standish while they were both young; of a young man's passing fancy for her, which awakened in her heart an enduring passion; of his utter and absolute refusal to marry her, and her consequent vow that he never should marry any other woman.

Then followed a strange story of a crime committed of which she was the sole witness, her relentless determination to hold her knowledge of his guilt over his head as a rod of threatening; of his after failing in love and determination to gratify this genuine passion, and at the same time outwit Betsey Standish; of the means which he had taken to do this, and how they had succeeded.

After recounting all this story, he proceeded to will and devise all his estate, real and personal, to his daughter-in-law and her child.

It was a strong and terse and wholly valid will. Yet, apparently, after it was executed, he had been seized with the fear which had indeed followed and embittered his whole life, that, by means of bribery or what not, Betsey Standish might wring the secret of it from whomsoever should be its custodian.

Therefore he had hidden it in the solid masonry of his house. Had he really determined upon and forecasted, I wondered, his strange coming back to reveal its hiding-place? It was like Peter Tolman to do that; to carry on his intrigue and whet his revenge even beyond the grave.

But, at any rate, Betsey Standish was outwitted at last. Nothing could be plainer than that.

Betsey Standish lived long enough to learn how the ghost of Peter Tolman had checkmated her.

Miss Blanche married shortly after, and Peter

Tolman's great-grandchildren play now upon the hearth where once stood the black ghost.

R. H.

FACETIÆ.

AN ANCIENT VALET.

A GENTLEMAN of Angus had an ancient valet named Gabriel, whose petulance and license of speech went so far as to be almost intolerable. One day, at dinner, Gabriel took the liberty of calling something "a great lee."

"Well," said the laird, really offended, and rising from the table, "this will do no longer; Gabriel, we must part at last."

"Hout, tout, laird," replied Gabriel, pressing his master again into his chair, "whaur wad your honour be better than in your ain house?" not conceiving the possibility of his own removal.

HIS FUTURE.

At a fair a young man goes into one of the booths and consults a somnambulist on the future in store for him.

"Up to the age of thirty," said the latter, "you will be in the deepest misery."

"And then?"

"Then you will get accustomed to it."

BIGOTED.

"WHAT do you know about the prisoner?" asked the judge.

"I don't know nothin' 'bout him, jedge, only he's bigoted."

"Bigoted?" asked his honour.

"Yes, sah."

"What do you mean by 'bigoted'?"

"Well, jedge," explained the witness, "he knows too much foh one niggah, and' not nuff foh two."

A PATRON OF ART.

WE take the following from the "Detroit Free Press."

The Chief of Police was visited by a sharp-nosed, keen-eyed woman, who carried a chromo, 10in. by 14in. in size, in her hand, and who placed it before him and asked:

"Are you a judge of chromios and oil-paintings?"

"Well, I can tell what suits me?" he replied.

"Can you tell one from the other?"

"Yes, 'm."

"And what do you call this?"

"That is a chromo."

He wanted to say that it was the worst one he ever saw, but he didn't say so.

"Now, you are sure, are you?" she asked.

"Certainly I am."

"Well, that makes me feel a good deal better. I bought that yesterday of an agent for a chromio, and he had scarcely left the house when one of the neighbours came in and said he'd swindled me, and that it was nothing but an oil-painting. I thought I'd bring it down and get your opinion, and you say it's a chromio, do you?"

"I do."

"All right—thanks. I've always been an enthusiastic patron of art, and if that man had got fifteen shillings of me on false pretences it would have kind o' set me up against the old masters."

ALWAYS take a rope into your room at the hotel. It may enable you to slide out even when there is no fire. A big board bill is just as bad as a conflagration.

THE REASON WHY.

A JOHN BULL conversing with an Indian, asked him if he knew the sun never sets on the Queen's dominions.

"No," said the Indian.

"Do you know the reason why?" asked John.

"Because an Englishman cannot be trusted in the dark," was the savage's reply.

HIS OPINION.

A VERY young clergyman was recently ap-

pointed curate in a village where the rector was getting old. The living was in the gift of the Lord of the Manor, whom the young man was naturally anxious to please. After his sermon he accosted the squire, very nervous as to the effect he had produced.

"I hope you did not find my sermon too long, Sir George?"

"No, no," replied the squire, rather absently, "I do not think it was too long."

"I am very glad to hear that," exclaimed our friend, much relieved. "I feared you would find it tedious."

"Oh!" said Sir George, suddenly waking up, "I did not say it wasn't tedious."

"MARTHA'S VINEYARD'S a darned fraud," said a Western tourist, after a brief sojourn there. There isn't a grape growing on the whole island, and not a soul I met had ever seen Martha, or could tell where she lived."

WHEN can you be said to swallow glass-ware?—When you buy a tumbler and goblet.

Is four quarters make a yard, how many will make a garden?—If seven days make a week, how many will make one strong?

THE following is one of the neatest epigrams we have seen for many a day. It was written for a barber:

"What annoyed other folks never disturbed his repose,
'Twas the same thing to him whether stocks fell or rose;
For blast and for mildew he cared not a pin,
His crops never failed, for they grew on the chin."

A SIMILE.

"PA," observed a Danbury boy to his father "what does Mr. Pitkins and Julia find to talk about in the parlour by themselves, four hours a night every night in the week?"

The old gentleman pulled a splint out of the broom, and slowly prodding his teeth with it, replied:

"I got a hunk of meat yesterday, an' we had it boiled for dinner, didn't we?"

"Yes."

"An' had it cold for supper?"

"Yes."

"An' your ma hashed it up for breakfast this morning, didn't she?"

"Yes."

"An' to-day I got another hunk, which, is on the same road, ain't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's the way with Pitkins an' your sister Julia."

AT A RESTAURANT.

WAITER: "Anything to follow, sir, entres?"
SHARP CUSTOMER: "If I do have anything, it must be on a plate."
—Fun.

A SWEET SABBATHARIAN.

A WOMAN is far more sensitive than a man. She has finer feelings and a more delicate mind. There are very few men who realise this, and in consequence woman is made to endure much unnecessary suffering.

One of our merchants was going to church with his wife on Sunday morning, and she put her hand to her head.

"What's the matter?" he asked, startled by the look on her face.

"Oh! I have got on my brown hat."

"Eh!" ejaculated the astonished man.

She burst into tears.

"Why, Martha, what is the matter with you?" he demanded.

"Don't you see what is the matter?" she returned, in a sobbing voice. "I've got on my brown hat with my striped silk. Oh, what will people say?"

NO GREAT CATCH AFTER ALL.

IRATE SQUIRE: "Hi! you sir! You're fishing in my river. I demand what you've caught."

FISHERMAN: "All right, guv'nor. I've caught a cold, and 'm catching the rheumatics, and you're jolly welcome to 'em both."

—Funny Folks.

A MARKED DRAMATIC CONTRAST.

An audience laughing and the house in tiers.
—Funny Folks.

THE Primeval Garment.—The Monkey Ob-server.
—Funny Folks.

CRAFTY.

WHAT species of craft does a wholesale tailor resemble?—A cutter with an out-rigger.
—Funny Folks.

If you wish to rise to society you must not get on the stilts.
—Funny Folks.

Do not discard your old friends because they do not belong to clubs. They may turn out to be trumps for all that.
—Funny Folks.

CONCLUSIVE.

LODGER: "I detect rather a disagreeable smell in the house, Mrs. Jones. Are you sure the drains—"
—Punch.

WELSH LANDLADY: "Oh, it can't be the drains, sir, whatever. There are none, sir!"
—Punch.

A PRACTICAL VIEW.

"How lovely in the calm stillness of evening to listen to the Nightingale's note."

"Ye' th, he's a doocid fine fellow, is the Nightingale; but I thay (bright idea), he must be a beathly noo'thance to all the other little birdth that want to go to thleep."
—Fun.

IN THE STREET.

JACK: "Hulloh, 'Arry, look here at the 'Daily News' bill. 'The Ciesarewitch on the Lom.'"

'ARRY: "Well, that is a go. It's allus been on Newmarkit 'Eath ever since I can remem-ber."
—Fun.

THE ART OF CONVERSATION.

BRITISH TOURIST (to fellow-passenger, in mid-Channel): "Going across, I suppose?"

FELLOW-PASSENGER: "Yaas. Are you?"
—Fun.

EXPECTANT.

LADY'S MAID: "And remember, Granny, when the Duchess comes you must say 'your Grace.' Do you understand?"

GRANNY: "Yes, yes, I understand. 'For what I am about to receive the Lord make me truly thankful.'"
—Fun.

A BAD ILLUSTRATION OF HIS ART.

Nor long ago, a lecturer upon the art of memory, whilst dining at a hotel in one of our provincial towns, was inquired for and called away suddenly; upon which he immediately finished his repast and hurried from the room.

A moment or two afterwards, the waiter, coming around to the chair lately occupied by the professor, held up his hands and exclaimed, in astonishment: "Goodness gracious, the memory man has forgotten his umbrella!"

A POOR PROSPECT.

In the news from the seat of war little or no mention is made of any deficiency in the Russian Commissariat. The Czar, however, and even the most sanguine of his advisers, must have begun to fear by this time that there will be no Turkey for Christmas.
—Punch.

HIS VOICE.

ROSSINI walking one day in Passy with a friend, passed a stout street musician singing to a guitar in the most horrible fashion the serenade from "Barbiere." The composer stopped, and gave the vocalist a piece of money.

"What!" said his friend, astonished; "you encourage this robust mendicant? He has no infirmity needing pity."

"Oh," said Rossini, "didn't you hear the voice with which he is afflicted?"

STATISTICS.

NUMBER OF SHEEP IN THE WORLD.—A table has been prepared, in which the estimated number of sheep (four-footed) in the world is given, taking the last returns. In the United Kingdom in 1876 there were 32,252,579 sheep, in Russia

in 1870 there were 49,130,000, in Germany in 1873 there were 24,999,406, in Austria in 1871 there were 20,103,395, in France in 1872 there were 24,589,647, and in Spain in 1865 there were 22,054,967, showing a total in Europe of about 190,000,000. In Australasia in 1875 there were 62,000,000; the Cape, 16,000,000; River Plate, 60,000,000; North America 50,000,000; remainder of America, 6,000,000; and total 385,000,000. Turkey, North Africa, Persia, &c., say 65,000,000; India and China say 35,000,000. Grand total, 484,000,000.

WHATEVER YOU DO, DO CHEER-
FULLY.

WHATEVER you do, do cheerfully,
As if your heart was in it,

'Twill smooth the way to the goal you seek,
And give you strength to win it.

For little of silver or gold you'll get,
If you make up your mind to frown and fret;
Little of joy for a lonely hour,

If you never have planted a single flower.
What though the task a hard one be,

Still with a smile begin it;
And whatever you do, do cheerfully,
As if your heart was in it.

The help you give with a cheery word
Is a double help to your neighbour,
For it puts a song in the weary heart
That knoweth no rest from labour.
For little you'll know of real delight
If you work for yourself from morn till night,

And never have a penny to spend,
Or a loving thought for a needy friend;

The thread of life will longer wear,
If with a song you spin it;
So whatever you do, do cheerfully,
As if your heart was in it.

You make your cross a heavy one
Than ever the Lord intended,
If you sit and sigh at the bottom of the stairs,

Down which your hopes descended.
'Tis better by far to live your day
In a wholesome, happy, light-hearted way,

Than to carry about a gloomy face
As if the world was a dismal place.
If you never have sung a song of joy,
Gratefully now begin it,

And whatever you do, do cheerfully,
As if your heart was in it.

J. P.

GEMS.

It is not high crimes, such as robbery and murder, which destroy the peace of society, so much as the village gossip, family quarrels, jealousies, and bickerings between the neighbours—meddlesomeness and tattling which are the canker that eats into all social happiness.

A wife's bosom should be the tomb of her husband's failings, and his character far more valuable in her estimation than his life.

A PUNCTUAL man can always find leisure, a negligent one never.

DANGER should be feared when distant, and braved when present.

The most serious business with a great many people is never to seem serious.

KINDNESS is a language which the dumb can speak and the deaf can understand.

Young folks tell what they do; old ones what they have done; and fools what they will do.

Riches do not half so much exhilarate us with their possession as they torment us with their loss.

The grape crop in California this season promises to be the largest and best ever produced.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

HUCKLEBERRY CAKE.—Two cupfuls sugar and one of butter beaten to a cream, the well-beaten yolks of five eggs, one cupful sweet milk, three of sifted flour, one teaspoonful nutmeg, one teaspoonful cinnamon, the well-beaten whites of five eggs, one teaspoonful soda, dissolved in a very little hot water; at the last stir in one quart of ripe fresh huckleberries that have been washed and drained, also well dredged with flour. Bake it in a loaf, or in square tin piepans, in a moderate oven.

WATERMELON CAKE.—Take two cupfuls of sugar, one of butter, one of milk, the whites of eight eggs, two cupfuls of flour, one of corn starch, and two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Take one-third of the batter and mix half a cupful of currants with it; take another third and add to it a very little cochineal and a lump of alum the size of a pea dissolved in a little water. Flavour to taste and arrange in your pan as marble cake.

VEAL SWEET-BREADS WITH TOMATOES.—Set over the fire two quarts of nice, ripe peeled tomatoes, stew half an hour slowly in their own liquor and strain through a coarse sieve; then put in four or five sweet-breads, well trimmed and soaked in warm water; add a little salt and cayenne, and one quarter of a pound of butter, smoothed in three spoonfuls of flour. Stew slowly till the sweet-breads are well done, or about an hour and a half. A few minutes before dishing stir in the beaten yolks of three eggs.

COTTAGE CHEESE.—Put some sour milk in a warm place until the whey begins to separate from the curd, but by no means let it get hard. Pour the curd into a three-cornered bag, in the shape of a pudding bag, hang it up and let it drain until no more water will drip from it. Then turn it out into a pan, mash the curd very fine and smooth with a wooden spoon; add as much good rich cream as will make it about as thick as butter. Salt it to your taste. Sprinkle pepper over the top if you choose.

BREAD-CRUMB PUDDING.—Make a quantity of bread crumbs by rubbing the crumb of a stale loaf through a fine wire sieve; put a pint of milk and one ounce of fresh butter into a saucepan on the fire, with sugar to taste, and the thin rind of a lemon, cut, if possible, in one piece; when the milk boils strew bread crumbs into it until a thick porridge is obtained; turn it out into a basin. When cold remove the lemon rind, and stir in one by one the yolks of four eggs, mix well, then stir in the whites of two eggs beaten up to a stiff froth, and a small quantity of candied citron peel cut very thin. Have a plain mould, buttered and bread-crumbed very carefully, all over, pour the composition into it, and bake it about half an hour. Serve cold, with a compote of any fruit round it.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A RELIC OF THE PAST.—The other day a dog belonging to some pedestrians on the Downs at Brighton scratched up a "Rose Noble" of Edward III. in excellent preservation.

THE death of a bloater merchant has created a sensation, as he was found to have been the possessor of the following names, Zaph Naph Pomer Obadiah Nicodemus Francis Edward Clark.

INFLUENCE OF WINE BOTTLES ON WINE.—It has recently been discovered in France that wine may be injured through the glass of the bottles in which it is contained being too alkaline. According to analyses given by the "Revue Industrielle," glass for wine bottles should yield per 100 parts: silex, 58.4; potash or soda, 11.7; lime, 18.6; clay and oxide of iron, 11; other ingredients, 0.3. Glass in bad bottles has been found to contain: silex, 52.4; potash or soda, 4.4; lime, 32.1; clay and iron, 11.1. The wine suffers principally from excess of lime. Thus, in glass composed of silex, 45; soda, 15; lime, 30; and clay, 15, for example, the wine became thick, and lost its aroma. The best bottle glass contains from 18 to 20 parts of lime, and 59 to 60 silex; the worst, 50 to 52 silex, and 25 to 30 lime.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CONSTANT READER.—We cannot recommend the use of depilatories. See what a pair of tweezers will do for you.

A. Q. Z.—Artificial coral may be made by adding one ounce of resin to two drachms of vermilion and melting them together, then painting over your peeled and dried twigs or other selected articles with the hot liquid. Cinders, stones, &c., may be dipped into the mixture. White coral may be imitated with white lead, and black with lampblack mixed with resin.

K. E. C.—Work may be had sometimes from law-stationers, but your writing is not round enough for such copying, and personal attendance is constantly required to receive the work when it comes in. Watch the advertisements or advertise yourself for what you want, or apply to those persons who undertake to address letters, wrappers, &c., for mercantile firms.

HETTIE.—"She who will not when she may when she will she shall have nay." If the gentleman likes you best he may come back to you. In any case act more wisely in future, taking notice of the familiar fact that a cat sometimes plays with a mouse till it is lost.

B. L.—Get the matter cleared up one way or the other by all means. A straightforward course is always the best. Never mind the photograph and presents—gentlemen often have to suffer greater losses than those at the hands of the fair sex.

CAREY S.—We do not believe in the possibility of anyone being alive after an uninterrupted sleep of five years. There are several instances recorded of long-continued suspended animation, but nothing at all approaching this extraordinary case. The fact that a shilling is exacted from everyone who is admitted to see the sleeper has much to do with it. If the shilling fell off entirely no doubt the girl would soon wake up.

BLUEBELL & SNOWFLAKE.—Colour of hair auburn and light brown respectively.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—Writing bold and free, but the letters are nevertheless indistinctly formed.

A SUFFERER.—You seem to be the victim of hypochondria. We recommend you to seek the advice of a doctor, as there is probably considerable derangement of your digestive powers. You require plenty of vigorous exercise, cheerful society, and change of scene, habits, &c., as well as medicinal agents in the shape of mineral waters, tonics, and stimulants.

LAURA.—1. Take from six to ten drops of the concentrated solution of chloride of soda in a wineglassful of pure spring water every morning. Rinse out the mouth as well with a teaspoonful of the chloride in a tumblerful of water to remove the odour that may arise from the teeth if they are carious. 2. Oil of lavender mixed with oil of rosemary, cinnamon, nutmeg, &c., is used as a stimulant, cordial, and stomachic.

ARTHUR BARTON, 16, Chesapeake, has written us a letter which displays impudence and ignorance in equal proportions. When our correspondent has sufficiently mastered the rudiments of English grammar to be able to distinguish the difference between the copulative "and" and the disjunctive "or," he will probably realise the egregious blunder he has made in attempting to criticise that which he does not understand.

A. M. G.—A few drops of oil of cloves, alcohol, or acid will preserve a quart of the muckage of gum arabic or gum tragacanth from turning sour. A small quantity of dissolved alum will preserve four pints.

ONE IN DOUBT.—Pulverised pumice stone is used to remove the gloss and imperfections on varnished surfaces. It is applied by rubbing with woollen cloth and water. Botten stone is used in the same manner, but applied only on work that requires washing.

GEORGE B.—Lead and zinc do not really unite. When melted together and allowed to cool slowly the lead falls to the bottom. If kept together in fusion and repeatedly stirred the zinc sublimes with great rapidity.

EMILY K.—We are frequently asked for a cure for freckles. We refer our correspondent to previous answers and to the following: Wash in fresh buttermilk every morning, and rinse the face in tepid water; then use a soft towel. Freckles may also be alleviated by applying to the face a solution of nitre and water. Another good wash for freckles is made by dissolving three grains of borax in five drachms each of rose water and orange-flower water. There are many remedies for freckles, but there is none that will banish them entirely.

LITTLE LOUIE, twenty-eight, dark hair, hazel eyes, would like to correspond with a seaman in the Royal Navy. Respondent must be the same age and good-tempered.

E. F. E. would like to correspond with a young gentleman about eighteen, tall, dark, fond of home and music. She is tall, dark.

ADA and MINNIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Ada is eighteen, tall, blue eyes. Minnie is seventeen, golden hair, violet eyes. Respondents must be between eighteen and nineteen, handsome.

M. E. G., eighteen, good-looking, hazel eyes, would like to correspond with a good-looking young lady, of a loving disposition.

LOVING ANNIE, eighteen, would like to correspond with a dark young gentleman with a view to matrimony, good-looking.

FLORRY and EMILY, friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Florry is seventeen, brown hair, blue eyes. Emily is sixteen, medium height, fair hair, blue eyes, considered good-looking. Must be dark, tall, good-looking.

ROSIE V. D., eighteen, fair, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, steady, and fond of home.

CAREY, seventeen, dark, brown hair and eyes, good-tempered, of a loving disposition, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman about twenty-two, good-tempered.

SAUCY MAGGIE, seventeen, tall, brown hair and eyes, would like to exchange carte-de-visite with a young man. Must be about twenty.

MARGARET M., twenty, fair, brown hair, dark blue eyes, fond of music, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-seven.

COMING HOME.

SAY good-bye to hill and dell,
Pretty little rover;
Take your farewell roll and run
In the scented clover.

Butterflies are losing heart—
Blossoms sweet are dying—
While the fairy thistle down
Through the air is flying.

Coming home, my little one,
Long will you remember
Country rambles, country joys,
Lasting till September.
City rules will bind you fast,
School-bells ring each morning—
For the garden of your mind
Surely needs adorning.

Bid farewell to shady lanes,
Bonnie lad and lassie;
Farewell to the pleasant sails
On the lake so glassy.
While her hand is in your own
And her bright eyes gladden,
Breathe the farewell tender word,
Sweetly she will listen.

She perchance will think of you
Mid these scenes of beauty;
When she, in her city home,
Doeth maiden duty.
For, say Cupid, little rogue,
Hidest among the roses,
And my lad is oftener found
Where the bees repose.

Bid good-bye to grand old woods,
Fields and shining rivers;
Oh! ye toilers seeking rest—
Oh! ye earnest lovers!
For your hearts will be renewed,
And your courage strengthened,
For the Eden glimpses you got
When the bright days lengthened. M. A. K.

JANIE, twenty, medium height, brown hair, dark eyes, would like to correspond with a sailor in the Royal Navy. Respondent must be good-looking, and of a loving disposition.

WILLIAM, thirty, fond of home, would like to correspond with a young woman about twenty-five. Domestic preferred.

JUANITA and VIVIAN, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Juanita is dark, brown hair and eyes. Vivian is fair, auburn hair, blue eyes. Must be between twenty-one and twenty-three.

NAT, twenty-five, medium height, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

CHARLIE and JOSEPH, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Charlie is nineteen, brown hair, grey eyes, good-looking. Joseph is twenty-one, dark.

EDWARD W., a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-one, curly hair, blue eyes, fair, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen. Respondent must be tall, dark, of a loving disposition, and fond of children.

NELLIE and DAISY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Nellie is sixteen, fair, tall, good-looking.

MARIA, fond of home, medium height, blue eyes, dark, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, and fond of home and children.

LYLANDER, twenty, tall, dark, wishes to correspond with a young lady about sixteen or seventeen, of a loving disposition.

EMILY B., thoroughly domesticated, brown hair, fond of home, tall, fair, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-five.

LOWEY A., eighteen, tall, auburn hair, dark brown eyes, of a loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman, tall, dark, and of a very loving disposition.

C. D., B. E., and A. D., three friends, wish to correspond with three young gentlemen. C. D. is twenty-two, medium height, dark hair and eyes. B. E. is eighteen, tall, fair, light brown hair, blue eyes. A. D. is seventeen, tall, fair.

LIZIE, nineteen, light hair, light blue eyes, of medium height, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young man of medium height, good-looking, fond of home.

G. S., twenty-four, a signalman in the Royal Navy, medium height, dark eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady.

A. L. F., twenty-four, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady.

JULIA, EMILY, and MARY, three friends, would like to correspond with three young gentlemen. All are between eighteen and twenty, of a loving disposition, considered good-looking. Respondents must be loving, fond of home and children.

W. C. C., twenty-three, tall, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty with a view to matrimony.

TOM, twenty-six, tall, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Must be good-looking.

L. A. D., twenty-two, brown hair, hazel eyes, handsome, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony, about the same age, good-looking, brown hair, medium height.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MAUD is responded to by—G. J., nineteen, fond of home and children.

HANLEY by—T. E. F., twenty, fair, blue eyes, tall, of a loving disposition.

W. H. T. by—X. L.

TRY by—Lily, dark, medium height, thoroughly domesticated.

BOB by—Ethel, medium height, dark, thoroughly domesticated.

HARRY by—Eliza, twenty, medium height, and rather fair.

VIOLET by—Alexander, twenty-four, brown hair, blue eyes.

IRENE by—George, twenty-three, dark hair and eyes, fond of music.

FLYING ROYAL YARDARM by—Lively Annie, nineteen, fair, dark hair, blue eyes, medium height, of a loving disposition.

MICK SWANS by—Mary, sixteen, tall, fair, blue eyes, good-looking.

MICK DINGBAT by—Florry, seventeen, medium height, fair.

LILY by—Victor, eighteen, hazel eyes, dark, fond of home.

LOUIE by—Aacho, nineteen, tall, fair, hazel eyes, fond of music.

S. S. W. by—Amelia, twenty-two, tall, dark.

FOAM ROYAL THUCK by—Kate, fair, blue eyes, good-looking.

EMMA S. by—Antrim, tall, dark, fond of home and society.

FRED by—Jemima, twenty, medium height, dark, and loving.

BOB by—Tina, seventeen, tall, fair.

M. B. by—Milly, twenty-one, medium height, fair, blue eyes.

MAUD W. by—J. D., twenty-six, fond of home, medium height.

LOUIE O. by—Jack Flagstaff, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-one, brown hair, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition.

CARRIE O. by—Ditty Box, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-one, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, fond of home.

E. W. by—Amelia, twenty-four, rather tall, fair, fond of home.

PAR by—Kate, twenty-one, medium height, fond of music, fair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated.

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